

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

L O C A L 3 6 5 7







**UNITED STEELWORKERS**  
LOCAL 3657  
60 BOULEVARD OF THE ALLIES  
ROOM 706  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15222

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

If news from the morning of November 9, 2016, has you wondering, “Where do we go from here?” you might consider another moment in history. On the exact same day in 1935, a group of unions in the American Federation of Labor launched the Committee—later Congress—of Industrial Organizations in response to the hundreds of thousands of workers in the steel, auto, rubber, and electrical industries who were organizing to improve their lives on and off the job. That John L. Lewis, chief architect of the CIO, punched out one of his critics in the lead up to this event makes the story even better. The CIO and its vision for justice and dignity in the workplace, community, and nation thus became a driving force in American life.

One hundred years from now historians might be able to make sense of 2016. In 12 months, we lost David Bowie, Prince, and Carrie Fisher; and worst of all, a Twitter troll was elected President of the United States. In spite of our frustration and grief, though, we should take pride in all that we did in 2016.

As employees of the International Union, we processed paperwork to make sure that contracts could be negotiated, provided technical support for local union leaders and staff representatives, coordinated large conferences and small meetings, and balanced numerous accounts, among other things. The United Steelworkers has an impressive reputation for service that is based, in large part, on our work.

Our local union has had a busy year, too. Several committees became incredibly active, and we improved communication between and among members in the District Offices and International Headquarters. Significantly, members of Local 3657 devoted much of their own time and energy to assisting USW brothers and sisters who were in need. Finally, we also resolved several issues that were important to our members through our grievance mechanism and stewards’ council.

The bottom line is that things can change quickly when we work together. Let’s keep our heads up and get ready to throw some punches in 2017!

In Solidarity,

John Lepley  
President, USW Local 3657

# OUR LEADERSHIP

## **President**

John Lepley

## **Vice President**

Patrick Young

## **Recording Secretary**

Lisa Nutter

## **Financial Secretary**

Josh Keirse

## **Treasurer**

Steffi Domike

## **Grievance Chair**

Jenny VanSchyndel

## **Headquarters Grievors**

Doug Ward  
Eric Russell  
Josh Keirse

## **Field Grievors**

Jenny VanSchyndel  
Leslie Blasko

## **Trustees**

Jenny VanSchyndel  
Carol Gehm  
Barbara Pugliese

## **Guide**

Mary Kay Sipe

## **Inside Guard**

Brittani Murray

## **Outside Guard**

Elizabeth Laux

## **District Stewards**

### **District 1**

Laura Shelton

### **District 2**

Elizabeth Laux

### **District 4**

Valerie Thomas

### **District 7**

Teri Luna

### **District 8**

Denise Smith

### **District 9**

Mary Kay Sipe

### **District 10**

Leslie Blasko

### **District 11**

Tiffany Olson

### **District 12**

Laura Walker

### **District 13**

Yesenia Alfaro

## **Washington, D.C, Office**

Carolyn Keys

# STRONGER THAN EVER

This past year, members of USW Local 3657 worked together to build a stronger and more connected local union. The local took big steps forward in opening lines of communication at all levels and connecting members in the building with members in the field. Committees also tackled exciting and bold organizing projects, taking action within the union and in the community. As a result, today, USW Local 3657 is a stronger union than it was a year ago.

The local union's Health and Safety Committee navigated through a year of construction in the Headquarters and made major advances in ensuring that the building is accessible to members with physical disabilities. The Women of Steel and Civil Rights Committees and Fight Back Pittsburgh took to action in the streets and in the city, standing up for economic, racial, and gender justice. Members of the Grievance Committee judiciously administered our collective bargaining agreement, successfully resolving many grievances and even taking one case to arbitration.

With one-third of our local union's membership in field offices around the country and dozens of members in the Headquarters spending the majority of their time on the road, maintaining effective and consistent communication has always been a challenge. The communications teams of the local worked hard to maintain a consistent flow of information ensuring that important documents and minutes are never more than a few clicks away from every single member of Local 3657. This year, the local union leadership team also began holding regular conference calls with members in the field to answer questions and hear about the issues and challenges that employees in the field are facing.

We have all worked hard to build a stronger local union—in the building, in the field, and in our communities. And thanks to that hard work, today we are stronger than ever.



# OUR COMMITTEES

In 2016, Local 3657 continued its tradition of having a solid roster of strong committees allowing every member to be active in the union whether it's at the bargaining table or out in the community. Here is a summary of the many activities and actions organized by each committee.

## CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Our local union's **Civil Rights Committee** continued its deep commitment to serving our local on civil, human, and women's rights issues throughout 2016.

In addition to serving our sisters and brothers regarding these issues, the committee has served the community as a whole through its connections to constituency groups including the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA), and Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), among others.



Through the CBTU, our local continues to organize AFL-CIO workshops on the history and growth of mass incarceration in the United States.

Through LCLAA, our local participated in the annual Three Kings Day Celebration, the International Workers Day march on May 1, as well as a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration of the life and legacy of Roberto Clemente.

President John Lepley appointed all current members of the committee, which includes Yesenia Alfaro, Paulette Battisti, Sherry Boler, Shirley Bellamy, Janet Hill, Elizabeth Laux, Audrey Minor, Brittani Murray, Guillermo Perez, and Doug Ward. Brothers Perez and Ward serve as co-chairs, and Sister Laux as recording secretary.

# FIGHT BACK PITTSBURGH

As the Associate Member Program of USW Local 3657, **Fight Back Pittsburgh** (FBP) is a unique, worker-center style organization that brings community activists and other labor supporters into our local union. In 2016, Fight Back Pittsburgh has continued to mobilize and organize to take bold action for workers' rights in Pittsburgh and around the country.

In March, when United Students Against Sweatshops organized a major march and rally at the University of Pittsburgh in support of graduate students and faculty members working to form a union and join the USW, Fight Back Pittsburgh hosted action planning trainings and informational forums to help bring 500 people to the streets of Oakland. Later in the year, we continued to support the University of Pittsburgh organizing campaign by hosting a large picnic for students and faculty after Pittsburgh's annual Labor Day parade.

When the shadowy, anti-union lobbying group ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) came to town, Fight Back Pittsburgh activists made headlines by organizing a bold, direct action to disrupt the group's board of directors meeting outside of their gathering place at the Omni-William Penn Hotel. Over the summer, FBP activists took that fight on the road, mobilizing for protests at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland. Then in the fall, we hosted Rock Against the TPP, a major concert and rally headlined by the punk-rock group Anti-Flag to challenge the now-defunct Trans-Pacific Partnership.



A strong pillar in Pittsburgh's labor community, Fight Back Pittsburgh has been instrumental in promoting a culture of labor activism in our community. On May Day, we celebrated International Workers' Day by organizing the first annual May Day Picnic. And throughout the year, Fight Back Pittsburgh redoubled its efforts to share the Steel City's rich history by hosting a labor tour of Pittsburgh and publishing an online, interactive map of Pittsburgh's major labor history sites.

Throughout 2016, Fight Back Pittsburgh took to the streets to mobilize for housing justice, racial justice, fair trade, workers' rights, and immigrant rights. In 2017, we intend to continue these fights and hit the ground running. As this report goes to print, plans are being put into place to send busloads of Fight Back Pittsburgh activists to



descend on Washington, D.C., to challenge Donald Trump at his inauguration and on his first day in office.

## GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

This year, the **Grievance Committee** filed a total of eight grievances. The majority were filed as a result of various disciplines received by our members. Others were filed due to the International's failure to post a Notice of Availability for a position in the mailroom, an individual receiving a demotion, and a salary reduction due to work performance concerns, as well as how the 15-Year Rate is applied to those who receive promotions.

One grievance was sustained, and three of the eight grievances are to be determined in the ongoing arbitration hearing. The first day of testimony was December 1, 2016, and the second day has been scheduled for February 2, 2017.

## HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

We started out the year with a chemical being used during work hours in one of the headquarters' elevators. This event, associated with the remodel of the elevators, signaled the beginning of a busy and challenging year for our local **Health, Safety and Environment Committee**. Luckily, we also began 2016 by finally convening the Joint Safety, Health, and Environment Committee, which has been contractually required for a number of years. This gave us a forum to address the many issues that subsequently arose.

In March, we were notified that routine testing of the water systems at headquarters found some strains of Legionella bacteria to be present. Measures were taken by the local to inform our members and to present best practices. Management hired a contractor to extend testing throughout the building and to initiate superheating the water, flushing the pipes and installation of an ionization element. These measures seem to have controlled the outbreak. Our local is now focused on getting office sink aerosols replaced with low-spray units.

Our committee stayed active monitoring excessive noise and air quality throughout the reconstruction of the garage and headquarters surroundings, which is still ongoing as this report went to print. This work overlapped somewhat with access issues, and we made sure that the ramp to the building was safe and secure for all.

## NEW MEMBER COMMITTEE

Our local continues to build strength and solidarity through the work of our **New Member Committee**. In 2016, we welcomed 12 new and enthusiastic members, and each was personally greeted by a committee member. The committee makes sure that everyone knows how our local functions and makes sure they get all of their questions answered.

On August 16, we conducted our first ever New Member Orientation specifically for members in the field using our new interactive conference call system. Participants received their packets by e-mail so everyone could follow along during an informative and engaging session.

Our next orientation in 2017 will include new members both at headquarters and in the field as we continue to grow our union.

## RAPID RESPONSE COMMITTEE

**Rapid Response** remains an integral program within our union. Local 3657 did a tremendous job engaging in 2016, particularly in defeating the Trans-Pacific Partnership and pushing back on other issues on the state level here in Pennsylvania. Engagement in the TPP postcard national action was close to 98 percent, and that is inclusive of our brothers and sisters in the field. Our local should always be a shining example for the members we serve when it comes to actively engaging in legislative issues that affect not only us and our work, but touch every member that we represent.

Another highlight for 2016 is the increased activism outside of Pittsburgh. Our field staff members in our District offices have stepped up. We were very excited to see new faces at our Rapid Response Conference in April, and the sisters who attended remained active throughout the year, often going the extra mile making sure that the staff members in our Districts were taking part in our actions. We look forward to continuing that trend into 2017 as we build program within the local.

Looking into the next year, we know that we will need your activism more than ever. We expect to see unprecedented attacks on the labor movement and all that we fight for – and we will once again be calling on each and every one of you to continue the fight for strong policies that build a solid middle class for all.

Thank you for all that you do for our members each and every day.



# WOMEN OF STEEL COMMITTEE

2016 was a steady and successful year for the Local 3657 **Women of Steel Committee**. We continued our mission of raising funds for local causes and awareness of issues affecting women everywhere.

One of our biggest highlights occurred during the Women of Steel Conference in March when we organized a rally in recognition of International Women's Day. Hundreds of women began the march at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in downtown Pittsburgh and ended outside of Point Park University where several activists spoke about issues of gender equality, including pay equity. We also collected baby clothing and women's products during the week-long conference to donate to local women's shelters.



In February, we held our annual crockpot cook-off where several amazing dishes made all of our mouths water. The money raised during the event was donated to the International's food drive efforts.

And to close out the year, we began collecting hats, scarves, and gloves in December to tie around trees and street signs in order to make them easily accessible to the city's underserved homeless population.

We are proud of the work we accomplished last year with the help of all Local 3657 members, and we look forward to continuing our tradition of helping others and serving the community in 2017.

# OUR DISTRICTS

Our Local 3657 members play important roles in the ten Districts in which we represent members. The following reports offer some highlights from each District.

## DISTRICT 1

The past few years for District 1 have seen new additions due to recent retirements. We currently have numerous clericals who have been here for more than 20 years, one for over 30 years, and another with over 40 years of service! This can only be testament to the fact that we work with a great Director and Staff in District 1.

The clericals took part in various Labor Day celebrations in our District this past year as well as phone banking and door knocking during the 2016 elections. We look forward to continuing to fight for our members alongside our great union.

Laura Shelton  
Steward, District 1

## DISTRICT 2

This past year has been a busy one for administrators in District 2. Along with their everyday assignments, our support staff in Michigan and Wisconsin helped to prepare for, and participate in, our biennial USW District 2 Conference held in Milwaukee in April. They also collected donations and stuffed backpacks for the District's First Annual School Supply Drive. This project helped over 100 children in the Milwaukee area obtain the necessary supplies for the new school year. The clericals' other activities included our Labor Day celebrations in both states along with door knocking and leafleting at plant gates for the 2016 elections.

Jenny VanSchyndel  
Steward, District 2

## DISTRICT 4

District 4 had a relatively quiet year. With regard to our bargaining agreement, the only issue we ran into involved vacation time for a permanent part-time employee. After speaking with the Director, he agreed that the member should finish out the year with



the vacation time already scheduled and moving forward, adjustments can be made to allotted time in the New Year.

Valerie Thomas  
Steward, District 4

## **DISTRICT 7**

We had a very busy year in District 7, which includes the states of Illinois and Indiana. Local 3657 has seven members that work in our five sub-districts, including Nikki Zepeda, who became a permanent member in 2016.

Most recently, District 7 has been in the public eye because of the terrible situation at Local 1999 in Indianapolis (Carrier Corp.). We have fielded solidarity calls in support of our brothers and sisters from New York to Maine and all places in between. We are proud of the solidarity displayed among our members in Indiana and everywhere within the union.

Teri Luna  
Steward, District 7

## **DISTRICT 8**

District 8 has seven administrative assistants, which includes one permanent part-time employee, among four states. We have been through some plant closings, strikes, near strikes, and staff rearrangements. The sub-district administrators have done an outstanding job in keeping their respective offices running smoothly.

A special thanks to Shirley Bellamy in the Hampton, Va., staff office for her work on hot idle. She was able to get out on the ground when others were not. I also personally met International President Leo Gerard while he was in Louisville, Ky., touring plants in the area.

Even though we never get an opportunity to get together in this district, we do keep in touch by electronic means.

Denise Smith  
Steward, District 8

## **DISTRICT 9**

We currently have seven administrative assistants in our district, including one permanent part-time employee. Our offices are in St. Croix and St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Gardendale, Ala., Collierville, Tenn., Harrisburg, N.C., and Maryville, Tenn. Over the last couple of years, we have had two administrative assistants retire and one resign. As a result, their offices were closed - Winter Garden, Fla., Gadsden, Ala., and Mobile, Ala. – and the staff representatives who worked in those offices were divided among the remaining locations. We have a positive working relationship with SRU and are all hoping that 2017 will be a better year for USW and all of our locals and members.

Kaye Sipe  
Steward, District 9

## **DISTRICT 10**

It's been a busy year for District 10. In the last year and a half, we hired three new support staff members who are doing a tremendous job. We also had a few staff retirements and change of assignments for staff representatives. The support staff did a great job keeping up with all of the challenges these changes brought with them.

As always, it's been quite a contest fighting for workers' rights, and it doesn't look any better with the new regime, but I know District 10 is ready for the fight.

Leslie Blasko  
Steward District 10

## **DISTRICT 11**

District 11 has five senior administrative assistants; two are in Minnesota, two are in Missouri, and one is located in Iowa. In early 2016, we all traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, for a staff meeting and training. We also had our district conference in St. Louis this year. Three of the five administrators were able to attend and work at the week-long conference. While there, we were able to attend classes and presentations and had a wonderful time. Terri Pierce was also able to attend the USW Press Association Conference this year.

Overall, 2016 was a great year for Local 3657 in District 11.

Tiffany Olson  
Steward, District 11



## **DISTRICT 12**

In July 2016, the District 12 office moved from Albuquerque, N.M., to Castle Rock, Colo. This was a busy time moving, cleaning, and rearranging. District 12 still maintains a small staff office in Albuquerque with one administrative assistant. We also still have one administrative assistant in our Sub-district 1 office in Covina, Calif., and an administrative assistant in our staff office located in Concord, Calif. In the last year we have also obtained a temporary part-time administrative assistant in our Sub-district 3 office located in Kent, Wash.

Laura Walker  
Steward, District 12

## **DISTRICT 13**

District 13 has been very quiet and running smoothly. We have not had issues with any of our Local 3657 members in our states. We do have a Local 3657 administrator who is retiring early 2017, and we hope to fill that position soon. Our sisters in the Sub-district offices have done an excellent job in taking care of things in the office. Many of them are great volunteers and make the union proud.

Unfortunately, District 13 has faced floods with many losing their homes. We'd like to give a big shout out to our Sister Dianne Babin, District 13 Women of Steel coordinator, who has taken on the task of hosting many drives to help those impacted by these floods. We thank everyone involved and hope to continue in being a success next year as well.

As a steward, I hope to keep an open line of communication with the administrators in the field and to continue to have a healthy work relationship with our co-workers.

Yesenia Yannet Alfaro  
Steward, District 13

# A LOOK AHEAD

Local 3657 had an incredible 2016. We took action at Headquarters, in the field, and in our communities. We addressed serious health and safety concerns, administered our contract through the grievance and arbitration procedure, and mobilized for economic, racial, and gender justice. Because of the great work of all of our committees and members, we stand stronger now, together, than ever before.

But the work isn't done.

In the coming year, we will face unprecedented challenges. As Donald Trump ascends to the presidency, our International Union and our local union will face grave threats and serious challenges. From attacks on health care to women's rights, to increased surveillance and diminished protections under labor law, our union, our members, and our movement are all coming under attack.

In this time of uncertainty, it is more important than ever that the members of USW Local 3657 have a strong voice at work. As our International Union navigates this challenging new political landscape, Local 3657 is our voice for raising and addressing concerns in our workplaces. We will also be heading into negotiations to bargain a new contract before our current agreement expires at the end of 2017.

These are interesting times. These are challenging times. That's why we are more committed than ever to building solidarity and continuing to make our local as strong as it can be.

# **IN MEMORIAM**

We dedicate this local report to two dedicated members of Local 3657 who we lost in 2016.

**Mickey Bolt**

**Darrell Monroe**

# **CONGRATULATIONS**

We'd like to wish the following members who left the union after many years of committed service in 2016 a happy retirement!

**James Coleman**

**Sheila Hahne-Bass**

**Glenda (Kay) Head**

**Diane Heminway**

**Joanne Roman**

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