

Published by TWU Local 100

# Transport Workers

**BULLETIN**

Spring 2015 • Vol. 6 • No. 1

## Union Launches “We Are Not Criminals”

Campaign to Counter  
Vision Zero Arrests

Pages 16-19



## We Know Who Our Friends Are, Now!

ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO FIND OUT WHO YOUR real friends are is in a good old-fashioned brawl. The fair-weather friends will cut and run. The true-blue ones will stay and take your back until the end.

We're experiencing this right now in the New York City Council, where we have been lobbying to amend Mayor de Blasio's overreaching and unjust Vision Zero law that has resulted in the outrageous arrests of several Local 100 Bus Operators.

We have launched a multi-pronged campaign to right this wrong, including a lawsuit to challenge Vision Zero itself; a paid media campaign, and a political effort in both the State Legislature and the City Council.

The Mayor is sticking it to us the best he can. Vision Zero is his baby, and he doesn't want anyone tinkering with it, even though there is widespread acknowledgement that MTA Bus Operators were never intended to be arrested under this law. But what we can't understand are those politicians who we supported throughout their political careers, only to watch them turn their backs on us on such a fundamental issue of right and wrong to transit workers.

So far, 25 Council members, one shy of a majority, have stepped up to support us, and some of those were a bit of a surprise. But there are others who, to be kind, are a bunch of backstabbing cowards. These duplicitous deserters have aligned themselves with de Blasio's Brownstone elitists who look down their noses on blue-collar workers, and who cheer the arrest of Bus Operators. These type of politicians talk-the-talk and claim to be pro-union pro-

gressives, but their actions prove otherwise. That's hypocrisy, and we in TWU Local 100 are going to take them all to task for it. These phony progressives are attacking our union and we are fighting back. It has already gotten very ugly for some elected officials who hold leadership positions in the City Council, and we've only just begun to expose these anti worker hypocrites.

### A New Family Benefit, [tutor.com](https://www.tutor.com)

Your children are facing challenges in the classroom unheard of during our time in school. Most parents simply aren't equipped to provide the help with homework their children need in this ever-increasingly difficult and competitive educational environment.

In Local 100, we believe that our responsibility as a labor organization does not stop in the workplace. We want to do the best we can by making all facets of your life, on and off the job, more comfortable and as stress free as possible.

That's why we have introduced a new family benefit to assist in your children's education, totally free of charge. It is called [tutor.com](https://www.tutor.com). (See page 4 for a description of this benefit and how to access it immediately.)

Here's how it works. In math, for instance, the online tutor can help your children with the most basic arithmetic problems to the most difficult concepts in Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus and Statistics. Tutor.com covers the same breadth of knowledge on all science subjects, English, social studies, even foreign languages.

For college-bound students, [tutor.com](https://www.tutor.com) provides support for all AP courses, and preparation for the SAT, PSAT and ACT tests.

If you're a parent who has sought the services of a tutor in the past, you know how costly it can be. Here's a really valuable tool you and your family can use for free because you are part of the TWU Local 100 family.

In closing, I would like to wish you and your family a happy and safe summer.





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# Transport Workers

June 2015 • Volume 6 • Number 1

**BULLETIN**

**8**

## TWU's Oldest Retiree Dies at 104

*Pat Della Rocco, 104, who never missed a day of work to sickness in 46 years as a Bus and Trolley Operator, succumbed recently.*



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## Ready for the Next 'Sandy'

*Workers at the 207th Street Overhaul Shop have insured that the MTA is ready for the next big hurricane after completion of two new super pumers.*



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## Bus Operator William Pena Remembered

*MABSTOA Division 1 Chair Richard Davis recalls murdered Bus Operator William Pena at this year's Workers Memorial Day ceremony.*



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## Union Endorses 'Move NY' Plan

*The Local 100 Executive Board has endorsed the 'Move NY' plan which is aimed at funding the MTA's Capital Plan and 'State of Good Repair' program.*



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**Front Page Photo**  
Noah Rodriguez





## President John Samuelson Announces a Valuable New Family Benefit At No Cost for all Local 100 Members

*"TWU is happy and proud to introduce this family-friendly benefit to all members in all divisions. Our children are faced with far-greater challenges in school today than 20, 10, even 5 years ago: assessment tests, common-core curricula, competition for college. This important on-line educational tool will definitely give your child a learning advantage. And the best part is that it is completely free. Take advantage of it."*

John Samuelson, President, TWU Local 100

## Anytime Academic Help for You and Your Family

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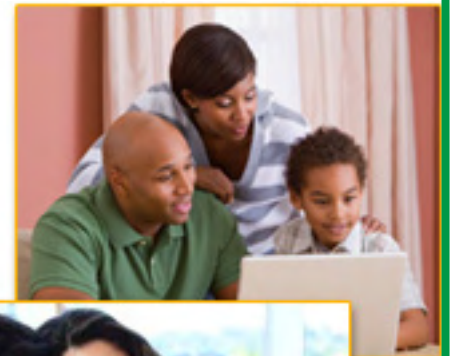
Personalized, live tutoring is now available for you and your children, K–College. **Five hours per month for each TWU member, completely free.**

*(Tutor.com charges \$2,160 per year for the same 5hr per month benefit that you and your family are getting, **AT NO COST.**)*

You and your family will now have access to the premier on-line educational website in the country – Tutor.com – as your newest union benefit.

Students can work one-to-one in an online classroom with an expert tutor to:

- Complete homework
- Understand concepts in all subjects
- Study for exams



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Your Username will be your Employee Pass # or ID number



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For Transit Workers, Just Another Day at the Office

# Train Crew Leads Rush Hour Evacuation

MORE THAN 500 SUBWAY COMMUTERS CAUGHT A BREAK AT 14th Street on the uptown IRT #1 train, but it wasn't a good one. A 12-inch water main gave way at 13th Street and 7th Avenue at about 6:45 PM on April 8, 2015 sending thousands of gallons cascading down into the transit system.

With red signals halting train service and the road bed rapidly filling with water, Train Operator Johnny Beniquez urged Rail Control for permission to bring the first half car into the station, and Conductor Sheron Askew announced an evacuation.

Thanks to the cool Askew there was no panic.

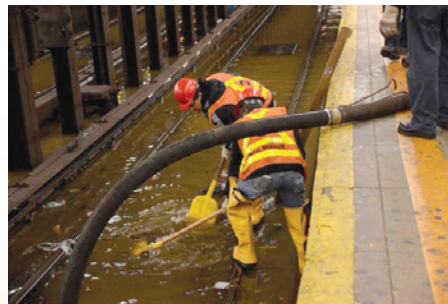
"I informed all the passengers of what was going on – the water main break," she said. "They had to all come to the first car, where they

had one door panel that was open for everybody to exit safely. I made sure that the last cars were empty – told those who were there to come to the first car. Once everybody got off, I told them what trains to take to get further uptown so they wouldn't be caught up in this chaos." This was the fourth subway evacuation for Askew, a 14-year transit veteran.

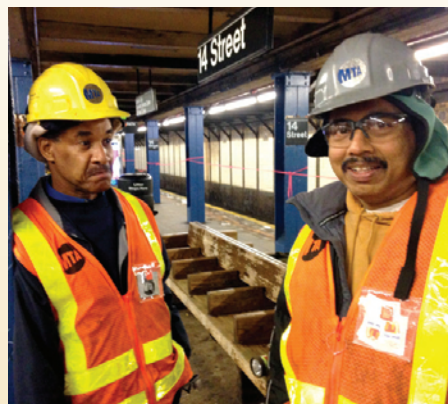
With the 1, 2, and 3 trains completely shut down between Chambers and Times Square, it took DEP about two hours to stop the water, and then TWU Local 100's signal maintainers, track workers, and ventilation and drainage crews went into action, to restore the station by the morning rush.

"They always need us," said Askew about the role of an NYCT Conductor. "Who's going to tell the people where to go and what to do in an emergency?"

**Everyday Heroes: Train Operator Johnny Beniquez and Conductor Sheron Askew.**



**Ventilation & Drainage Crews get to work after DEP shuts off the leak.**



**Signal Maintainer Milord, left, and Power Distribution Maintainer Mathai Geevarghese wait to get onto the tracks.**



**Calling All Titles! Signal Maintainer and Track Worker stand by as trains are put out of service.**





# MTA Heeds TWU Call to Ban Hate Ads

LESS THAN FOUR MONTHS AFTER LOCAL 100 President John Samuelson petitioned MTA Chairman Thomas Prendergast to ban “hate ads masquerading as free speech” from the transit system, the MTA Board voted 9-2 to do just that.

The Board actually went well beyond the prohibition of so-called “hate ads” by barring ads for political parties, ballot referendums or any ad that is “political in nature.” The Board vote took place at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on April 29, 2015.

In his letter to Prendergast, TWU President Samuelson stated that the union believes incendiary ads put worker and rider safety at risk. “I believe the MTA must re-assess its decision to allow (hate) ads to be placed in the transit system,” said Samuelson in particular reference to anti-Islamic ads placed by the group, American Freedom Defense Fund, and its founder, Pamela Geller. “These advertisements are particularly volatile in the wake of the Paris (Charlie Hebdo) attacks and rising anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic rhetoric that have brought us to a moment infused with new urgency,” continued Samuelson. “As an employer committed to non-discriminatory hiring and work practices, you have workers of all faiths in your employ. The MTA cannot let hate speech pockmark the system and potentially put your employees, not to mention your riders, in harm’s way. Geller’s advertisements are an affront to free speech and add to the danger not only to the members I represent but all members of the riding public.”

Samuelson sent the letter after meeting with a dozen Local 100 Station Division members of the Muslim faith, who said

they felt particularly targeted by the Geller ads. One of those members told Samuelson that he had been interrogated by a passenger who wanted to know “are you a Muslim?” while pointing to a Geller advertisement, which declared that the Koran commands believers to kill infidels.

In addition to the Samuelson letter, the union presented the MTA with a petition against the objectionable ads signed by nearly 400 transit workers.

MTA Board member Charles Moerdler, a Holocaust survivor, voted in favor of the motion. “Hateful speech is not harmless speech. Only a fool or rogue would argue otherwise,” he said.

However, Board member Alan Cappelli said that the Geller group should be allowed to post its ads, including their most recent offering that shows a man with a scarf across his face saying, “Killing Jews is Worship that draws us close to Allah. That’s his Jihad. What’s yours?”

Christopher Dunn, associate legal director for the New York Civil Liberties Union, said at the public Board meeting the proposal was “small-minded” and “intolerant.”

“The New York City Transit system is our public square,” he said. “It is the place that virtually all of us pass through day in and day out. Because of that, it is a central part of our speech in New York City.”

TWU President Samuelson countered, “some people may think our transit system is some grand public concourse for the exchange of protected speech. But to transit workers, it is our workplace. These same people would not like these hateful or objectionable ads hanging over their desk in their nice secure offices. By the same token, our members don’t want these ads in their workplaces either.”



President John Samuelson (center) and Station Division Exec. Board members Tareque Ahmed (5th from left) and Paul Piazza (2nd from right) meet with a delegation of Muslim transit workers at Transport Hall earlier this year. Delegation includes Mohammad Akbar, Zubayer Ahmed, J. Rahman, Sadeque Ahmed, M. Hasseen, A. Rahman, Mof Rahman, Shamem Ahmed and Munir Khan.





*Scholarship winners and families gather for group shot with Local 100 President Samuelsen, Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray, VP's Tony Utano, JP Pataflo, Maurice Jenkin and Kevin Harrington, and M3 Technology President John Pescitelli.*

## 25 More Students Receive College Grants

FOR THE FIFTH 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 125 the number of young people who have received the scholarships.

The awards were presented to recipients at a luncheon at TWU headquarters on Jan. 12, 2015. Local 100 President John Samuelson announced at the event that M3 is doubling its commitment to the program, and will fund fifty \$1,000 scholarships to eligible recipients this year.

All Local 100 members in good standing are eligible to submit the names of children or grandchildren (or themselves) who are entering or attending a 2 or 4-year college.

An application for the 2015 scholarships can be found on the Local 100 website.

### 2014 M3 TECHNOLOGY, LLC-TWU LOCAL 100 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

#### SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Shawn Matthew  
Katherine Sepulveda  
Nikolay Nyashin  
Shardia Aberthany  
Derrick Rice  
Patrick Antosiewicz  
Amanda Webb  
Keziah Watters  
Artem Shmulyarenko  
Courtney Zollo  
Xavier Vergara  
Dylan Maloney  
Siarra Bell  
Mugaba Theodore  
Christian Thomas Lane  
Elijah Smith  
Tisha Williams  
Alexandra Ramsammy  
Joseph Leone  
Mirana Zannat  
Patricia Gallagher  
Sherinrose Palatty  
Frank Miranda  
Tashauna Hill  
Karen Sepulveda

#### COLLEGE/MAJOR

St. John's/Computer Sci.  
Hostos Community College  
Lehman/Political Science  
Dartmouth/Liberal Arts  
SUNY/Environmental Sci.  
John Jay/Criminal Justice  
Hunter/Psychology  
York/Social Work  
Hunter College  
Molloy/Social Work  
St. John's/Physics  
Ithaca/Liberal Arts  
Kingsboro CC  
Queensborough CC  
Alfred State/Elect. Eng.  
Virginia State/Engineering  
College of New Rochelle  
Bronx Community College  
Univ. of Pittsburgh/Ind. Eng.  
Hunter/Economics  
Stonybrook  
NJIT/Biomedical Eng.  
Stonybrook/Biology  
SUNY Buffalo/Biology  
The New School

#### TWU LOCAL 100 MEMBER

Cherlan Matthew  
Maria Jimenez  
Nikolay Nyashin  
Cleveland Manley  
Lynda Wyatt  
Polikarp Antosiewicz  
James Webb  
Wady Watters  
Andrey Shmulyarenko  
David Zollo  
Carlos Roman  
Maria Maloney  
Gregory Bell  
Valerie Theodore  
William Lane  
Rodney Smith  
Tisha Williams  
Philip Ramsammy  
Joseph Leone  
Mohammad Rahman  
Lawrence Gallagher  
George Palatty  
Anselmo Miranda  
Ella Hill  
Maria Jimenez

#### DEPARTMENT

Car Equipment  
MABSTOA Div. 2  
MOW-Structure  
RTO-C/R  
TA Surface  
MOW-Structure  
TA Surface  
TA Surface Maintenance  
Car Equipment  
TA Surface  
RTO-C/R  
RTO-T/O  
Stations  
RTO-C/R  
MOW-Track  
Stations  
RTO-C/R  
MTA Bus  
MABSTOA  
Stations  
RTO-C/R  
MOW-Structure  
MABSTOA Div. 2  
RTO-C/R  
MABSTOA Div. 2

# Pat Della Rocco, TWU's Oldest Retiree, Dies at 104

TWU MOURNED THE PASSING on March 30, 2015 of Local 100's oldest retiree, Pat Della Rocco a member of the Greatest Generation and one of the few men with a direct connection to the earliest days of the union. He was a few weeks shy of his 105th birthday with he died.

Pat's daughter, Barbara Hutton, informed Local 100 President John Samuels and the Bulletin of his death. "I had him for a long time and it is hard for me to believe he is no longer here," said Mrs. Hutton. "His spirit will live on with me forever. He was a remarkable man."

President Samuels said of his passing: "Pat and his generation of our earliest members built this organization into what it is today. Their sacrifices all those years ago helped pave the way for the current and future generations of New York City transit workers who enjoy good wages and benefits unheard of before TWU. It is sad to lose such a wonderful union Brother who was truly a bridge to the union's past glories."

Pat retired in 1976 after 46 years on the job as a Trolley Operator (1930–1936) and Bus Operator.

World War II interrupted his driving career. He served in the U.S. Army's 34th Infantry Division, the Red Bulls, and saw heavy combat in North Africa and Italy. Sadly, Pat's 2-year old daughter, Josephine, died in 1945 and he was unable to come home for the funeral. "The War was over in Europe, but they were planning for the invasion of Japan and told me I couldn't go home," he recalled with tears in his eyes during an interview with the TWU Bulletin at his daughter's home in Rockland County in 2010 shortly after he turned 100.

When Pat got back to the States, he restarted his career



**Pat Della Rocco, right, with a co-worker standing near trolley in early 1930's.**



**Pat, shortly after turning 100, with his daughter Barbara.**

driving for the old Omnibus Co. out of the 100th Street depot.

Despite his advanced years, Pat had vivid memories of the earliest days of the union when TWU founder Michael J. Quill would come

around to the depots to urge unionization.

"I knew Mike well," Pat told the TWU Bulletin during the 2010 interview. "He used to stand up on his soap box and tell us 'join the union, be a free man.'"

"Some of the men were afraid that the company would fire them if they joined the union," Pat said. "But Mike promised us that that wouldn't happen."

Pat remembered starting the job at 60 cents an hour. But after the union was voted in, he told the Bulletin, "we never had is so good."

"After the union came in, we got real overtime pay and paid vacations and a pension," he said. "And all the petty harassment stopped."

Pat's co-workers nicknamed him "the Iron Horse" after the New York Yankees legendary strong man Lou Gehrig. Why? "I never took one sick day in 46 years on the job," said Pat in 2010. "I worked 13 hours every day – a three hour school run in the morning and then a 10-hour regular run. And if the company called me on my day off, I said, no problem, I'll be there. Nobody could keep up with me."

When asked in 2010 if he could sum up his great career as a bus operator and original member of the union, Pat didn't hesitate. "I loved my job. I loved to drive. It was fun."



# Daily News Mints 2015 Hometown Heroes

AMONG THE FIRST PEOPLE TO OPEN THE DAILY NEWS EACH MORNING are transit workers who get up while the City sleeps. On January 29, they got a treat – a special 12-page section inside the paper showcasing the paper's 2015 Hometown Heroes in Transit. Before the day's end, the Hometown Heroes section was seen by nearly a million people.

They read about transit workers like MTA Bus Operator George Smith, who wrestled with a gunman in the aisle of his B12 bus on January 31, 2014 and made sure passengers were safe before driving to the local police precinct where the gunman was arrested.

This is the 3rd year the Daily News has sponsored the Hometown Heroes in Transit Awards.

TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson, MTA Chairman Tom Prendergast and Daily News President Colin Myler helped honor the winners at a breakfast at Manhattan's Edison Ballroom. The breakfast was MC'd by New York 1 morning anchor Pat Kiernan, who shares with many transit workers the distinction of having to get up at 3 AM.

"Our transit workers put themselves into potentially dangerous situations every day, whether they are track workers who work near live third rails and trains, or they are bus operators navigating through New York City streets," said Tom Prendergast.

"This great city wouldn't be nearly so great without the transit workers who move more than 8 million riders a day," said Daily News President Colin Myler.

The complete list of honorees includes a Bus Operator



*The 2014 transit Hometown Heroes pose for a photo.*

who drove a critically wounded teen to an ambulance station after gunfire erupted on her bus (and whose name is being withheld because of the incident), Conductor Jonathan Cassell, Train Operator Luis Manrique, Eagle Team Member Bob Esposito, Track Workers David Soto, Louis Albino, Clyde Ferguson, and Stewart Azzato, Car Inspector Kenny Williams, SIR Conductor James Thompson, Station Agent Theresa Green, 90-year old Machinist Frank Gurrera, and Bus Operator George Smith.



*Local 100 Vice President for MOW Tony Utano with recipients from his department.*



*President Samuelson with 90-year old CED machinist Frank Gurrera, who was featured in last edition of the Bulletin on page 1.*





## Pumping It Up at 207th Street

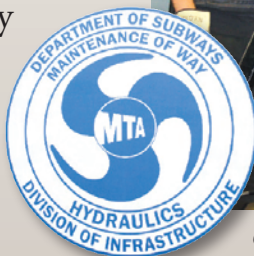


# SANDY, SCHMANDY!

## Bring on the Next Hurricane

AS NEW YORK BECOMES A WETTER PLACE WITH climate change forecasting heavier storms and rising seas, two new TWU-built rigs will be on the front lines protecting the subway system. They are 2600 GPM pumpers (that's gallons per minute, for the non-firefighters among us) that travel on the rails and can send a steady stream of water through hoses up 250 vertical feet, driving it up and out of the transit system.

TA brass ordered the rigs right after Sandy, for obvious reasons. And instead of contracting the work out, they turned to the Wreck Gang Draw Bar at the 207<sup>th</sup> Street Overhaul Shop. The gang – about 30 workers – generally installs and replaces draw bars after cars are damaged in derailments. This time, they had the opportunity – working with other crews of CME's and CMA's, and Air Brake Maintainers – to completely gut a work train car and build it back from scratch.



*Group shot of Car Equipment crew that worked on the pump car.*

The crew removed the floors, put in sparkling diamond plate throughout, removed and upgraded all of the electrical systems and communications equipment, put in new piping for the water lines and air lines, and installed diesel generators. They upgraded safety equipment throughout, and then also renovated two passenger cars, which will ride along with each pump car to carry personnel. When the cars





*CIB Nelson Matos installs door controller.*



*CI checks for air leaks.*



*CIB R. King, at left, looks over pump assembly.*



*Safety Director Tom Carrano (left) with Shop Chair Eric Domena (right) and two Car Inspectors.*

are put into service, RTO crews will drive them and hydraulic crews from MOW will operate the pumps.

CMD Robert Ruiz, who has worked in the Wreck Gang for years, says Transit bosses told the 207<sup>th</sup> Street Union Chair Eric Domena, how pleased they are with the work. They said keeping the work in-house saved them a lot of money.

“We put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into it,” Ruiz

said. “It’s not often that we get to do something like this.” He singled out one worker, CMA Frank Sylvestri, who passed away last year, for special mention. “Frank was one of the welder-mechanics,” Ruiz said. “He really busted his butt.”

Local 100 President John Samuelsen said: “Our thanks go out to 207<sup>th</sup> Street workers. They have once again proven the value and skill of the in-house workforce.”



*From left, Safety Director Tom Carrano with 207th Shop Officers Mark Oliveri, Courtney Jervis, Eric Domena and Jose Fernandez.*



*Welder Maribel Rivera.*



*Welders who did this beautiful job include Frank Sylvestri, Malachi Davy, and Jeremiah Sew.*





*William Pena's widow, Nancy, wipes away tear as NYC Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez (left) gives keynote speech.*

## Bus Operator William Pena Remembered at Workers Memorial Day Tribute

UNIONS OBSERVED WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY ON April 28 across the country to remember those who have suffered and died on the job, as well as to renew efforts for safer workplaces.

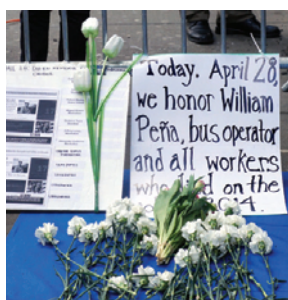
This year's remembrance in New York City held special meaning for TWU Local 100 members as several hundred workers from TWU, the Teamsters, DC 37, SEIU and numerous building trades unions gathered at the site of the death in February 2014 of Bus Operator William Pena.

Brother Pena was killed by a drunk driver,

Domonic Whilby, who had stolen a truck, run a red light and smashed into the bus at high speed. He has been in jail at Rikers Island since his arrest, awaiting trial.

Local 100 Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray spoke at the event on the southeast corner of 7th Avenue and 14th Street, as did OA Division 1 Chair Richard Davis, who introduced Pena's widow, Nancy, to the crowd.

The event also featured representatives from the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH). New York City Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez delivered the keynote speech.



*Many Local 100 members were at the Workers Memorial Day remembrance on April 28.*



*TWU officers, including Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray, with the Pena family at observance. Also shown are Shannon Poland (MOW), Richard Davis, Jesse Mendoza and Nicole Hecker (MABSTOA), and Derrick Ecchevaria (Stations).*



49th and Fillmore is now Edwin Thomas Way

# Street Co-Named in Honor of Fallen Bus Operator

SCORES OF LOCAL 100 MEMBERS FROM FLATBUSH Depot joined union officers, dignitaries and the family of Bus Operator Edwin Thomas on May 29 for a beautiful ceremony to co-name the street outside the Depot as 'Edwin Thomas Way.'

Brother Thomas was stabbed to death by an enraged passenger, later identified as a gang member, on Dec. 1, 2008. He was only 46 and left behind a son and daughter in their teens.

TWU Local 100 kept his memory alive with annual memorials near the site of his murder. But, through persistent advocacy by TAS officers, and with the help of City Councilman Alan Maisel, there is now a permanent memorial honoring his sacrifice.

Speaker after speaker, who included Local 100 President John Samuelsen, Vice President JP Patafio, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Assemblywoman Roxanne Persaud, Councilman Maisel, and MTA Senior Vice President of Buses Darryl Irick, spoke of the many dangers facing Bus Operators on the streets of New York.

Maisel, who did much of the political heavy lifting on the City Council told the assemblage: "Today we honor the life of Edwin Thomas, who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our City. I salute the transit workers whose unheralded contributions often go without recognition."

President Samuelsen said the perils facing Bus Operators on a daily basis make it "one of the most dangerous jobs in the City." He said that the union continues to make steady progress in safety for Bus Operators, and noted that our most recent contract mandates that every MTA bus be equipped with a safety barrier by the end of 2016.

Brother Thomas' daughter, Edley and son, Jeffrey, told the audience of their gratitude for this honor as well as the difficulties they have endured after the death of their father.

After the speeches, the new street sign and a new plaque were unveiled.



*Brother Thomas' daughter Edley, son, Jeffrey, and brother, Wallace, admire plaque outside Flatbush depot.*



*Street sign is presented to the family by President John Samuelsen and Councilman Alan Maisel.*



*VP JP Patafio speaks at ceremony.*



*Part of the crowd at event, with numerous TWU officers in front row.*



# Garner Family, Brooklyn DA Highlight Black History Celebration

THE SRO CROWD THAT ATTENDED THIS YEAR'S TWU Local 100 Black History celebration on Feb. 24, 2015 witnessed living history when they heard Alicia Flagg, the sister of Eric Garner, who died while being arrested by police officers on Staten Island seven months ago, address the event. The Garner case is one of a series of videotaped confrontations between police officers and black men that are re-shaping the racial dialogue in America and use-of-force policies by police departments from coast-to-coast.

Alicia is a New York City Transit Bus Operator out of the Jackie Gleason Depot in Brooklyn. Also on hand were Eric's mother, Gwen Carr, a retired Train Operator, and their aunt, a Station Agent. Both were introduced by OA Division 1 Chair Richie Davis, who spoke movingly about his personal experience of being profiled as a young black man in Brooklyn.

Alicia took the podium and first acknowledged her family's strong ties at the Union Hall, with nearly a dozen family members being TWU rank and file. "Not only am I



*Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson (center) with Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips (right) and VP Maurice Jenkins.*

a part of Local 100 – my mother has been part of Local 100 for a very long time," Alicia told the crowd. "She just retired three weeks ago."

Speaking of her brother, who millions saw on video succumb to a police choke hold, she said: "I just thank God I had him in my life for the time that I did. He helped people, gave people clothes, bought them meals when they were hungry. He is making a big statement at this point in time. He didn't make a lot of noise then, but he's making a lot of noise now."

She continued: "Even though some people feel they're above the law, we still respect the law, because [the police]



*Attendees at Black History celebration hold hands during a moment of silence.*



have a job to do. But we also have a job to do. We're protecting ourselves and we have a right to stand up for ourselves, and that's what Eric was doing."

Gwen Carr was given a plaque and flowers from union staffer Dexter Victory of RTO and OA Division 1 Chair Richie Davis. She thanked everyone in attendance "for being with me every step of the way. We have gone through a lot in the past seven months, but with you standing with us, this is how we made it through," she said.

In addition to the Carr family, attendees at the event heard addresses from TWU Local 100 President John Samuels, Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson, and Hazel Dukes, President of the NAACP New York State Conference. City Council members Robert Cornegy and I. Daneek Miller also attended.

Station Agent Joanna Briley, a stand-up comic in her spare time, had the room in stitches, and the band, Resura Arkestra, provided stirring entertainment. CED member Linda Bird presented the audience with a selection of her poetry.

Also, children from the New Flex Youths group presented readings from current and past civil rights leaders.



**The Garner family with TWU officers including President John Samuels, Sec'y Treas. Earl Phillips, VP's Tony Utano and Maurice Jenkins, OA Div. 1 Chair Richard Davis, Shannon Poland and Tony Aiken.**

**Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray (right) presenting award to Hazel Dukes of the NAACP.**



**Garner family with OA Div. 1 Chair Richard Davis and City Councilman Robert Cornegy.**



**Children of the New Flex Youths program performed at the event.**



**Local 100 volunteers who put the event together.**







# Union Launches Counterattack Vs. Mayor's Myopic VISION ZERO LAW

By Alan Saly

BILL DE BLASIO WAS ELECTED MAYOR AS A big-hearted progressive who would give a voice to the powerless and put the interests of the working class front and center. But his signature public safety initiative – Vision Zero – is making a mockery of that promise.

New York City Transit Bus Operators – the safest and most professional drivers in the City – have been targeted for nothing more than doing their jobs. Vision Zero had two components – lowering speed limits citywide and making “failure to yield” to pedestrians and bicyclists a misdemeanor, subjecting the driver to arrest.

Most everyone thought that the law was supposed to go after reckless motorists, but since it was enacted in June of 2014, six Bus Operators have been arrested – about a quarter of all motorists arrested under the law. Just like anyone else who is arrested by the NYPD, they are handcuffed and taken to the local precinct – and in most cases to central booking for processing and arraignment.

This has been happening even though the Vision Zero law, which amends the City’s administrative code, includes language that seems to exempt Bus Operators and other City, State and Federal employees from arrest while on duty. Here’s the language from the Vision Zero law, paragraph ‘d’: “This section shall not apply to persons, teams, motor vehicles, and other equipment working on behalf of the city of New York, the state of New York or the federal government while actively engaged in work requiring the presence of a motor vehicle in a location that interferes with the right of way of a pedestrian or person riding a bicycle.” The Mayor hasn’t been forthcoming about what he believes Section ‘d’ means for our members.

The Vision Zero law makes any person hitting a pedestrian or bicyclist in an intersection guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to arrest if they “fail to exercise due care.” But the law doesn’t say what “due care” is. Consider the case of 78 year-old Jean Bonne-Annee, who was fatally struck by a B44 bus at night in poor weather conditions while Bus Operator Reginald Prescott was navigating what police called “a very difficult left turn” onto New York Avenue from Far-

ragut Road. A review later showed that Prescott was traveling at 3 miles per hour.

The day after Prescott’s arrest by NYPD highway cops, President Samuelsen began giving interviews, slamming the arrest as an unwarranted humiliation of a civil servant who had followed all the rules. He received assurances from MTA VP for Buses Darryl Irick that the MTA wasn’t in favor of the policy, and some City Councilmembers who voted for the bill assured Local 100 that its intent never was to arrest our members.

Then on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, another arrest of a TWU Local 100 Bus Operator occurred when a 15 year-old girl was hit in an intersection in Williamsburg. The driver, Francisco DeJesus, traumatized, was brought to the hospital by EMS and then arrested by the NYPD. In an interview with the New York Times, President Samuelsen called the girl’s injury a tragedy but said the city and the police were putting drivers in an impossible situation by arresting them for accidents. “They navigate incredibly difficult streets loaded with pedestrians, and they do this without any enforcement on the pedestrian end of things,” Samuelsen said. “To arrest an operator for an unintentional accident is really just absolutely outrageous, illogical and anti-worker.”

But the arrest was praised by the cyclist advocacy group Transportation Alternatives, with it’s Director Paul Steely White putting out a statement saying: “We commend the NYPD’s Collision Investigation Squad for ar-





resting the driver and issuing a summons for failure to yield under Section 19-190 of the city's administrative code, also known as the Right of Way Law." Samuelsen roasted Steely White in the press calling him a "phony progressive intellectual jackass" for praising the bus driver's arrest. "His comments are absurd and constitute a total lack of understanding of the incredibly difficult work our operators perform," Samuelsen told the New York Daily News.

New York City Transit defended our Operators, with MTA VP of Safety Stephen Vidal telling the press: "Last year, MTA bus drivers traveled 152 million miles on New York City streets — more than 300 round trips to the moon. In the early 1990s, city bus drivers averaged 100 ac-

cidents per million miles. The rate is half that today." But the City's position didn't change.

Going on social media, Local 100 pointed out on Facebook and Twitter that arresting a bus operator defies logic: The operator is never a flight risk, he or she is subject to rigorous scrutiny by the MTA, and if found at fault in a fatal accident, the operator is likely to lose his or her job. But Transportation Alternatives and other "advocates" continued to misrepresent the Union's point of view, insisting that our defense of our operators amounted to wanting them to have a free pass regardless of fault.

Samuelsen released a statement urging all Bus Operators not to move their vehicles while pedestrians are in a crosswalk, and on February 19th, NYC DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, a key architect of the Vision Zero law, told Greg Mocker of WPIX that the intent of

Vision Zero is not to target bus drivers. But this stopped short of a commitment by the City to clarify the meaning of the law.



*TAS Bus Operators surround Francisco DeJesus (seated center), a victim of the overzealous Vision Zero law, at the union hall in Brooklyn. TAS VP JP Patafio is at far right.*



*President Samuelsen addresses the media on Vision Zero as VP JP Patafio, Sec'y Treas. Earl Phillips and others look on.*



Local 100's focus shifted to the City Council, and to supporting an amendment introduced in February by former ATU Local 1056 President and Bus Operator Daneek Miller to clear up the ambiguity in the Vision Zero law by firmly including Bus Operators with those exempt from charges. Local 100 PAC Director Marvin Holland and his staff were assigned full-time to lobby Councilmembers to support the bill, and Assemblyman Walter Mosley of Brooklyn introduced complementary legislation in the State Assembly to do the same thing. From just four supporters at the outset, the number grew to half of the Council's membership as this issue of the Bulletin went to press.

Other politicians, including Congressman Charles Rangel, publicly support the union's position as well.

The flurry of union activity continued with safety instructions to operators all over Brooklyn and the Bronx, and with the development of a policy position that called upon the City of New York to analyze dangerous intersections, install left-turn signals (the overwhelming majority of fatalities occur on left turns), re-engineer buses to improve the operator's lines of sight, and create mechanisms to enforce better behavior on the part of pedestrians and cyclists, who are often oblivious to buses, engaged on so-

cial media, or expect buses to stop on a dime when they physically cannot.

The Union began a media campaign with two hard-hitting ads in the Chief-Leader, and City and State, the first showing a Bus Operator in handcuffs, with the slogan, "We Are Not Criminals," and the second showing Operators in a police line-up, with the caption, "Not Your Usual Suspects."

Our fight began to pay dividends on February 24, when the case against Bus Operator Reginald Prescott was taken off the docket by Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson. It was an acknowledgement by prosecutors that the Vision Zero law had a hole through which you could drive a City bus: the concept of due care. On April 9th, Local 100 obtained the same result in the case of Bus Operator DeJesus. Before both decisions by the prosecutors, Local 100 Bus Operators in Brooklyn under the direction of TA Surface VP JP Patafio and his officers had staged rallies, safety instruction events, and solidarity meetings with the operators.

President Samuelsen continued to make the rounds of the media, aggressively putting forward the Union's position about the unfair targeting of Bus Operators in the Times, the News, the Post, on TV, and on WABC 770 where he spoke with UCOMM Radio's Kris LaGrange. All of those interviews are on Local 100's website and can be found by using our search function.

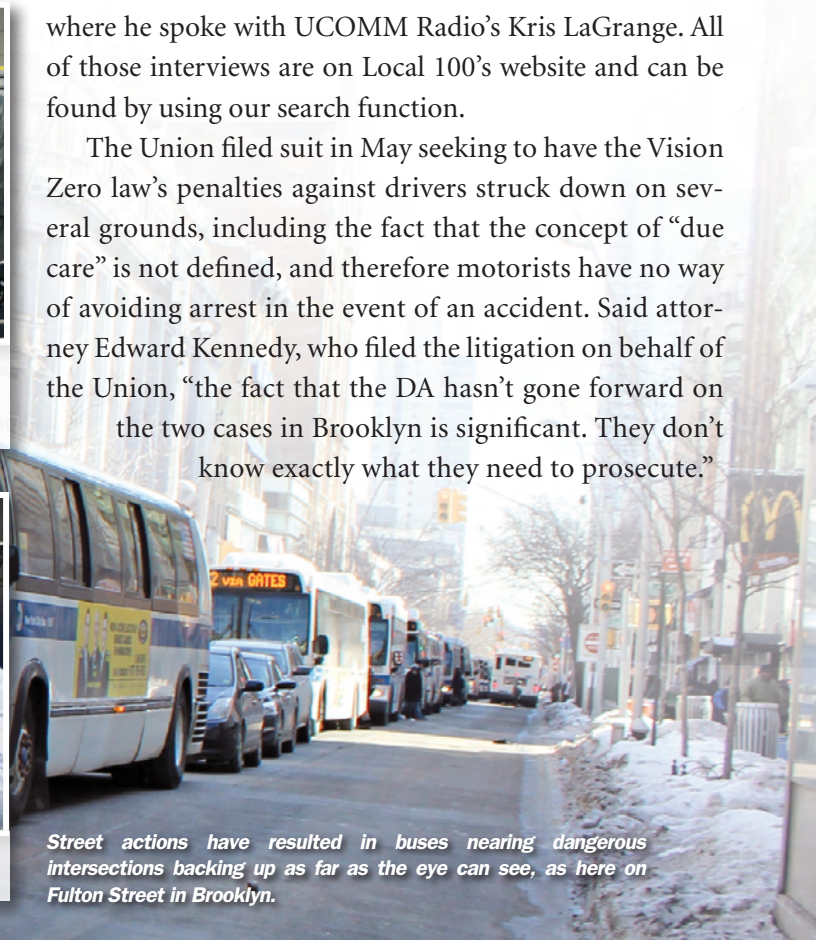
The Union filed suit in May seeking to have the Vision Zero law's penalties against drivers struck down on several grounds, including the fact that the concept of "due care" is not defined, and therefore motorists have no way of avoiding arrest in the event of an accident. Said attorney Edward Kennedy, who filed the litigation on behalf of the Union, "the fact that the DA hasn't gone forward on the two cases in Brooklyn is significant. They don't know exactly what they need to prosecute."



**Congressman Charles Rangel and Assemblyman Keith Wright announced their support for TWU's position on Vision Zero at Mother Clara Hale Depot, along with President John Samuelsen, Sec'y Treas. Earl Phillips and MABSTOA Division and Depot officers.**



**Mother Hale Bus Operators applaud President Samuelsen and Congressman Rangel.**



**Street actions have resulted in buses nearing dangerous intersections backing up as far as the eye can see, as here on Fulton Street in Brooklyn.**



# 1,300 Rank and File Members Make Albany Trip Lobby Day Boosts Union



The TWU local 100 rank and file – fully 1300 strong – crowded the halls of Albany's Legislative Office Building on March 24 for the union's annual Lobby Day in a drive to gain support for measures, including among others:

- decriminalize driving a bus by preventing the arrests of Bus Operators at accident scenes under Vision Zero;
- allow civil servants who are military veterans to buy back pensionable time;
- due process disciplinary rights for school bus drivers who don't have enforceable contracts with school districts;
- pumping money into new Bus Rapid Transit routes.

The Lobby Day event actually began the evening before with a Local 100 reception for legislators – where union officers and staff met Albany power-brokers. This year, the union hosted newly-elected Speaker Carl Heastie and at least two dozen other members of the Legislature. Union officers used the time to explain our positions on a number of issues. It was at this reception



**New Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (center) with RS LaTonya Crisp-Sauray, VP JP Patafio, and PAC staffer Michelle Gilliam.**



**President Samuelsen, ST Earl Phillips and Shannon Poland with NYS AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento (2nd from left).**





# n's Legislative Agenda

that State Senator Martin Malave Dilan announced that he would sponsor the union's Vision Zero amendment in his chamber.

The following morning, President Samuelsen and top officers greeted members coming off dozens of buses into the Empire State Plaza concourse in what has become a Lobby Day tradition.

Later, while addressing the membership assembled at the convention center, Samuelsen articulated the anger transit workers feel over the unjust Vision Zero law that has been criminalizing the lawful operation of buses. Many legislators spoke directly to this issue at the podium and assured TWU members that the law had been misinterpreted and should be corrected. TWU Local 100 Political Action Director Marvin Holland thanked the rank and file for putting muscle behind the fight, noting the great importance of Local 100 members making the trip up to Albany to directly lobby NYS legislators.

After the presentations and speeches, members thronged the hallways of the Legislative Office Building, meeting with legislators and pushing Local 100's agenda forward. Each member carried a packet containing the union's *legislative agenda* and information about the legislators they were going to see. They also were given documents to prep them about our key issues, and effectively spoke for their own concerns and from experience as transit workers. In dozens of face-to-face discussions with legislators and staff, Local 100 members made their points and highlighted their connections as constituents.



**President Samuelsen with Sen. Jeff Klein.**



**VP Tony Utano with Assemblyman Peter Abbate.**





# 1,300 Attend Lobby Day in



**NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli (center) with ST Earl Phillips and RS LaTonya Crisp-Sauray.**





# Albany



Assemblyman Nick Perry (center) with ST Earl Phillips and VP Tony Utano.





# 'Move NY' Plan Needed to Fund MTA Capital Construction

THE TWU LOCAL 100 EXECUTIVE board has thrown the union's political weight behind an emerging movement, championed by the non-profit Move NY and its founder "Gridlock" Sam Schwartz, to legislatively enact a new and permanent revenue source for MTA operations, and road and infrastructure improvements.

The Move NY plan would provide approximately \$1.5 billion in new revenues annually for the MTA's capital plan, service restoration, and increased service to perennially underserved communities. The plan relies on toll reform and other revenue generators to fund the plan.

Move NY Campaign Director Alex Matthiessen told the Executive Board in his recent presentation that the bulk of the funding would be generated by establishing tolls on the currently free East River bridges, while significantly reducing tolls on the Triboro RFK Bridge, Midtown Tunnel, Hugh Carey Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, and the Henry Hudson Parkway Bridge. The Hudson River crossings are not part of the plan.

An earlier plan for East River tolls bit the dust during the Bloomberg administration. But the explosion in ridership on the bus and subway system, coupled with a dangerously underfunded MTA Capital Plan, has breathed new life into the concept.

Politicians have been slow to line up behind this new plan as well. But endorsements by both the New York Daily News and the New York Times have helped move the dial for Move NY proponents.



*The Move NY plan is seen as essential to help fund the MTA's Capital Construction plan, which in turn funds state-of-good-repair work for Local 100 members.*



*Move NY Campaign Director Alex Matthiessen presents his organization's plan to the Local 100 Executive Board.*

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The Daily News writes: "As subway and bus ridership surges and service quality deteriorates, the MTA urgently needs a multi-billion dollar cash infusion to keep New York City moving. At this point, the Governor and Mayor are engaged only in happy talk. Show New York the money, gentlemen."

The New York Times, in its endorsement of the plan, said: "This problem falls squarely on Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who will have to find new revenues to expand

and modernize a system that is vital to the city's economy. When the city's economy suffers, so does the entire state."

In a letter sent to Governor Cuomo and legislative leaders in Albany, a coalition of 13 City legislators urged enactment of the Move NY plan. The letter was signed by State Senators Adriano Espaillat, Brad Hoylman, and Daniel Squadron; Assembly Members Richard Gottfried, Walter T. Mosley, Linda Rosenthal, and Jo Anne Simon; City Council members Margaret Chin, Laurie Cumbo, Corey Johnson, Mark Levine, and Donovan Richards; and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.





*Sec'y Treasurer Earl Phillips with group at GCS rally.*



*Public Advocate Tish James and City Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley (center) with members at GCS rally.*

# Union Wins Certification at GCS; Bargaining Begins

NINE MONTHS AFTER A STIRRING ELECTION victory among the 600 workers at the MTA's Access-a-Ride call center, the union is finally sitting down to negotiate a contract with the recalcitrant North Carolina-based contractor, Global Contact Services (GCS).

Company legal maneuvering caused the long delay from the September 2014 election win to actual bargaining. The NLRB issued its final certification of Local 100 as the sole collective bargaining agent for the workers in mid-May.

GCS, however, has employed an aggressive southern-style anti-union campaign against its workers, complete with terminations of those suspected of strong union sympathies. [Most recently fired was Sandra Lennon, a Brooklyn great-grandmother who was one of the few Call Agents kept on by GCS after it took over the contract from the prior provider, First Transit. Lennon, an outspoken Union supporter, was fired for allegedly giving an Access-A-Ride customer accurate information about why her ride was delayed. At the time of her firing in April she was the longest serving and highest paid GCS employee, at \$12.66 per hour.]

Local 100 has filed at least a dozen unfair labor practice suits with the NLRB for these terminated employees, and as we were preparing to go to print, several cases had been won with full back pay.

In the lead-up to negotiations, the union held a rally directly across the street from the GCS offices on Northern Blvd. in Long Island City.



*Organizer Frank McCann speaks at GCS rally.*

Public Advocate Letitia James and City Council member Elizabeth Crowley joined the rally to demand the company negotiate a fair contract, and to stop the abuse and intimidation of its workers.

Organizer Frank McCann told the rally that the previous contractor, First Transit, paid \$16-\$17 per hour, with decent benefits and a grievance procedure. However, said McCann, GCS refused to hire nearly 70 percent of the former workforce and now pays its workers as little as \$9.00 per hour.

GCS is headquartered in Salisbury, NC about 50 miles north of Charlotte. GCS President and CEO Greg Alcorn touts his company's success at keeping GCS a union-free company. Prior to the rally, a van-load of Local 100 members from the Organizing Department paid a visit to Alcorn's hometown, renting a trolley bus and handing out flyers in the Bible Belt town that quoted scripture, saying "You cannot serve God and money."



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# QUILL-CONNOLLY EVENT

## Honor's TWU's Irish Heritage

LOCAL 100 HOSTED ITS ANNUAL RECOGNITION OF the union's Irish roots at the 2015 Quill Connolly Day celebration on March 16. A packed house of union members and invited guests attended to honor the legacy of TWU founder and first International President Michael J. Quill and Irish labor leader and patriot James Connolly, who was executed by the British for his role in the Easter Rising of 1916.

The evening began with a performance by the NYCT Emerald Society Pipe and Drum band, followed by an invocation by Father Patrick Keating, the son of long time union activist, Bill Keating, a retired officer from RTO. Mick Cash, the newly elected General Secretary of the Railway, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), brought fraternal greetings from his union that, among others, represents thousands of workers on London's Underground.

Rita O'Hare, the Sinn Fein representative to the United States, spoke of recent activities in the campaign for a united Ireland.

Terry O'Sullivan, International President of the Laborers International Union of North America, delivered the keynote address and received an award for his career-long support for Irish freedom.



**Above:** Officers surround special honoree James Whalen (holding plaque), a Local 100 OA Maintenance officer for 39 years.



**Left:** President Samuelsen with LIUNA International President Terry O'Sullivan, who delivers the keynote speech at the Quill-Connolly event.

Local 100 President John Samuelsen used the occasion to honor James Whalen, MABSTOA Maintenance Vice Chair, with a special recognition award for his nearly four decades of service to the union.

Samuelsen also presented an appreciation award to Pete Donohue, the former transit writer and columnist for the New York Daily News.

After the speechifying, attendees were treated to traditional Irish fare, and were entertained by a young troupe of Irish Step Dancers from the Bridget Flynn School of Irish Dance in the Bronx.



**President Samuelsen with new RMT General Secretary Mick Cash.**



**President Samuelsen with former NY Daily News transit reporter (and newest member of the TWU staff) Pete Donohue.**



**Irish step dancers from the Bridget Flynn School in the Bronx performed.**



# TWU Local 100-MTA Launching a Comprehensive Health Awareness and Prevention Initiative

## First Event

**TWU Local 100-MTA Health Fair**

**When: Saturday August 22, 2015**

**Where: Transport Hall**

**195 Montague Street (3rd Floor)**

**Brooklyn, NY 11201**



TWU Local 100 and the MTA are planning a series of events for transit workers and your families focused on your long term health needs.

The programs will include awareness seminars, screenings and “how to” classes on healthy cooking and eating, First Aid, exercise equipment demos, and much more.

Doctors from Mount Sinai, Columbia Presbyterian will do screenings on blood pressure, total cholesterol, blood glucose, vision testing, hearing testing, stress testing, mammography, oral cancer check and much more. Also, representatives from Health Carriers Empire and UHC will be on hand to answer questions about your benefits.

## Your Health Matters Most



**Lots of stuff to do, and lots of cool giveaways. Best part, it's all FREE. So is the food and drinks.**

The Union and MTA are also planning a series of Health Care “Lunch and Learns” at worksites in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx.

More info will be forthcoming on the union website: [www.twulocal100.org](http://www.twulocal100.org)





# Widows & Orphans Event Honors our Fallen

HUNDREDS OF MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS turned out for a beautiful night of remembrance at TWU's 2015 Widows & Orphans Fund gala fundraiser earlier this year.

The event was held at Gotham Hall, a premier gathering site in midtown.

The families of many of the Local 100 members killed in the line of duty in the past 15 years attended, and participated in a moving video about their loved ones that debuted at the event.

Local 100 President John Samuelson delivered the keynote address. Special recognition awards were presented to New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO President Vincent Alvarez and Public Advocate Letitia James. Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray served as emcee.

The TWU Local 100 Widows and Orphans Fund is a

501(c)3 non-profit fund that provides substantial financial assistance to the families of transit workers who have been killed in the line of duty. The fund underwrites the cost of family medical insurance for the survivors, and provides a significant annual educational grant for each school age child through college.

President Samuelson explained that the TWU Local 100 Widows and Orphans Gala is an annual event with a dual purpose. First, it raises money to supplement funds raised

through voluntary bi-weekly check-off contributions by many Local 100 members. Second, and as important, it serves as a means to demonstrate the union's long-term commitment to surviving family members. As well, it helps provide peace of mind to all Local 100 members that their union will be there for them and their families should tragedy strike.



**Honoree Vincent Alvarez (center) with President John Samuelson and RS LaTonya Crisp-Sauray.**



**Family of Bus Operator Edwin Thomas enjoyed the night.**



**Fallen Track Worker Samuel McPhaul's family joined the event, and spoke for all the families from the dais.**



**Nearly 500 people turned out for the W&O event.**





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# Now, This is Real Power!

IT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A STAR TREK MOVIE, with thousands of blinking lights on scores of impressive looking control panels. It's actually a lot more impressive than a movie set because the panels and lights aren't for show.

The scene is NYCT's Power Control Center on 53rd Street, which controls and distributes all the electricity it takes to run the nation's largest subway system. And the people responsible for running this vital transit center are 150 workers, mostly TWU Local 100 members in the titles of Power Maintainer B, and Transit Electrical Helper.

TWU Local 100 Vice President for Maintenance of Way Tony Utano, visited the Power Control Center recently

and greeted new employees and said hello to old friends. Alongside Tony were Power Chair Eddie DeCamillis, LES Chair John Chiarello, and Vice Chair Stephen Higgins.

The members work around the clock tending to power needs and emergencies spread out over the three divisions, IND, IRT, and BMT. Each division comprises some 30 to 40 control zones where power is distributed through the third rails to run the trains and exhaust fans, controlled by fiber optic lines.

The Power Control Center operates under the supervision of Transit's Rail Control Center, just a block away on 54th Street, which may request that power be cut or restored to any section on a moment's notice.



*The Power Control Center at 53rd Street.*

*These are just some of the members who keep the subway system moving. Standing from left are: MOW Vice President Tony Utano; LES Chair John Chiarello; Power Chair Ed DeCamillis, and Vice Chair Steve Higgins.*





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# EVENTS: Never on the Sidelines



## LaTonya Crisp-Sauray a 'Woman of Influence'

The T.J. Martell Foundation, one of the premier cancer fundraising groups in the country, honored our own Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray at its Women of Influence luncheon on May 1, 2015. From left in photo: Robyn Givens of the Howard Stern Show; Delila, radio show host; Jue Wong, CEO StriVectin; Dr. Jimmie Holland of Sloan-Kettering; Helli Turner, CFO of SESAC; Elaine Turner, Designer, and LaTonya Crisp-Sauray.

## Local 100 Children Take SAT Prep at Union Hall

Local 100, in cooperation with the Local 100 Rewards Program, offered a full Princeton Review SAT Prep course at drastically reduced cost for participating families.

Photo shows the group who participated with Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips (rear, center), Vice President Tony Utano, right, and LES Chair John Chiarello, left.



## '101' Lucks Out in Foul Shooting Contest at Barclays

At Barclays Center on January 9, it was the Nets vs. the Sixers and TWU Local 100 vs. TWU Local 101 in a free throw contest after the big game. The favorites lost in both cases, the Nets falling to the Sixers and Mike Conigliaro's Local 101 team sinking 17 shots while Tony Utano's Local 100 squad had 16 as family members cheered them on. We'll do it again next year! Thanks to Modell's and Markhoff & Mittman for making it possible.







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# In Memoriam

## TWU Marks Sad Memorials

TWU LOCAL 100 MEMBERS GATHERED for three sad memorials in April for fallen Brothers.

Liverty Lines members gathered in the swing room at the company's Yonkers depot on April 16, 2015 to remember Barrington Garvey, killed while leaving picket duty during the 2005 strike.

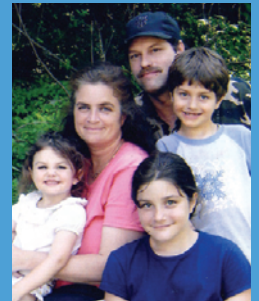
On April 24, 2015 members joined the family of Trackworker Danny Boggs who was killed by a train at Columbus Circle eight years ago. Three days later, members gathered on the mezzanine of the Hoyt-Schermerhorn Station in Brooklyn to mark the eighth anniversary of the tragic death of Marvin Franklin.

In 2007, the deaths of Boggs and Franklin just days apart led to a four-day safety stand-down of all track work for a review of safety standards.

Track Division Chair Paul Navarro, who eulogized both Boggs and Franklin, reminded mourners why a memorial for a lost co-worker is so important. "Why do we keep coming back here every year," asked Navarro. "We do so because the day we stop is the day we all start taking our safety for granted. It will be the day we begin to be indifferent about the safety of our co-workers. Then there will come a day when we will be shocked back into reality. We cannot let that happen. We cannot let down our guard. Safety must always be on our minds. Our own safety, and the safety of the our brothers and sisters."



*Track Division Chair Paul Navarro imparts words of condolence to Boggs family at Columbus Circle.*



*Danny Boggs and family at summer outing.*



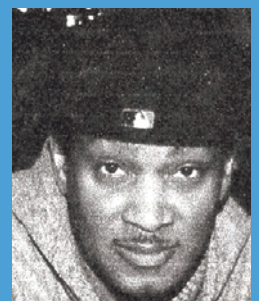
*Mourners gather for moment of prayer at Hoyt-Schermerhorn for Marvin Franklin memorial.*



*Marvin Franklin in a touching moment with this wife.*



*Members and officials gather in the swing room at Liberty Lines for the Barrington Garvey memorial.*



*Barrington Garvey*



# TWU Lays Down the 'Lawe'

By James Gannon

*The stories of so many of TWU's early leaders have been obscured by the passage of time and the long shadow cast by the deeds of TWU's charismatic founder Michael J. Quill. But TWU itself might be a footnote to history if not for their hard work and dogged courage. The Bulletin, from time-to-time, will focus on some of these important figures from the union's past as part of "Our Union's Roots" series.*

It was April Fools Day 1980, but this was no joke.

Thousands of New York City transit workers had hit the picket lines on that Tuesday morning in the first City-wide transit strike in 15 years. The strike would last 11 tumultuous days.

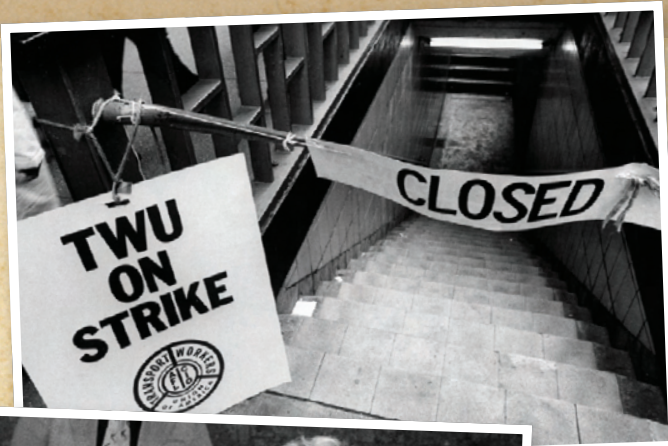
New York City Mayor Ed Koch lamented to the press: "The unthinkable has happened and now we have to figure out how to live with the unthinkable and we will."

The man at the center of this watershed moment in TWU's history was John Edward Lawe, a rugged Irish immigrant who had labored in a road repair crew and in Ireland's peat bogs before arriving in America in 1949 at the age of 30.

Lawe, one of ten children to Luke and Kate Lawe from Strokestown, County Roscommon, Ireland, worked as an elevator operator in a Manhattan high-rise for one year before finding work as a Bus Cleaner for the old Fifth Avenue Coach Co. at the 132nd Street depot.

By 1950, TWU was well established on the subways and on all the private bus companies in Manhattan and the Bronx. Fifth Avenue Coach was a hotbed of union activity and a popular landing spot for young Irish immigrants. Lawe fit right in.

He became active in the union as a Shop Steward. During the 29-day bus strike in 1953, he served as a picket captain for maintenance. Later that year, Lawe switched to transportation and quickly rose up the union ladder. He was elected Transportation Section Chair in 1955 and then Chair for all of Fifth Ave. Coach Transportation. Af-



**Lawe with  
MTA Chair-  
man Richard  
Ravitch during  
1980 strike.**

ter the historic 1962 bus strike that led to the creation of MABSTOA, Lawe was elected Division 1 Recording Secretary immediately, and then Division 1 Chair in 1964.

Lawe served on the negotiating committee during the union's first citywide transit strike in 1966. In 1968, he was elected Division 1 Vice President. Then In 1977, Lawe succeeded Ellis Van Riper as President of Local 100.

The decade of the 70's was a turbulent financial period for New York City, which in 1975 teetered on the edge of a Detroit-style bankruptcy. Who from that generation



# on MTA in 1980



*Local 100 President John Lawe greets members on the picket line.*

can forget the famous October 30th front page of the New York Daily News that blared "Ford to City: Drop Dead". President Ford, the day before, had vowed to veto any Congressional bailout for the City.

It was also a period of relentless inflation. Interest rates rose to as high as 20 percent. The media mocked the usurious bank rates claiming one could get a better loan deal from the mob on the Brooklyn waterfront.

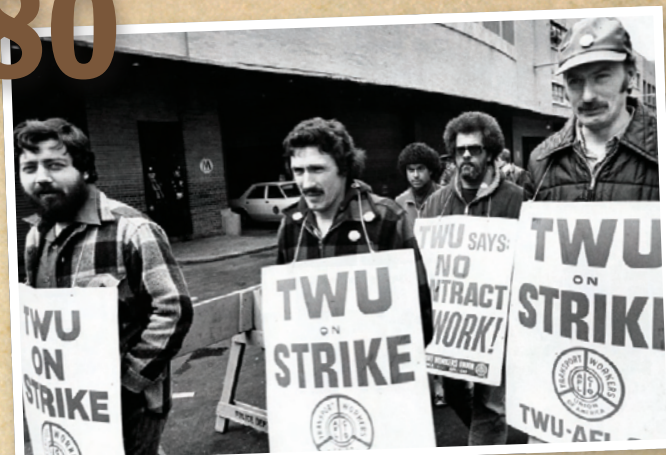
Workers were hard pressed to keep up with rising costs of food, gasoline and housing. Raises for city and state workers could not keep up.

After New Year's Day, Jan. 1, 1980, the MTA began planting stories in the press claiming it faced an enormous operating deficit and could not afford increases for the workers. It was not a promising start to negotiations.

Lawe, who had won a hotly contested three-way election for Local 100 President in 1979, was having none of it. On Jan. 6, 1980, Lawe told the press: "If management does not bargain in good faith and give us what we are entitled to, we will give them the strike that they are looking for."



*Employee photo of John Lawe, 1953.*



*Lawe, with the support of municipal union leaders, meets with Mayor Koch (right) at City Hall.*

The weeks rolled by quickly with no progress in negotiations. The MTA had presented the union with 41 takeaway proposals, including a demand that Bus Operators and Train Operators clean their own vehicles at the end of a run.

The MTA was playing with fire with Lawe, whom the press referred to in a kinder moment as "mercurial."

Midday on March 31, 1980 just hours before the "No Contract, No Work" deadline set by the union, the MTA finally made a wage offer.

It was too little, too late. After debating options until 2:00 am, The Board and Lawe rejected the MTA's offer and the strike was on.

For 11 days, that included Good Friday and Easter, TWU members manned the picket lines, vowing to stay out as long as it would take to win. The union conducted daily rallies at key points in the City to keep the public





*John Lawe speaks to huge crowd at City Hall during strike.*

pressure on the politicians and the MTA.

Finally, a public fact-finding board recommended a 23 percent increase over two years, that included a 9 percent increase on April 1, 1980; an 8 percent increase on April 1, 1981 and a projected COLA of 6 percent on Oct. 1, 1981.

The Executive Board, however, remained deadlocked (22-22) on whether to accept the offer or continue the strike.

Lawe stepped in to break the deadlock. He decided, without objection from the Board, to send the proposal out to the membership for a vote. The strike was over. The membership vote was 16,718 to 5,477 as tallied by the American Arbitration Association.

But the fallout of the strike was just beginning. The courts came down hard on the union, fining all strikers two days pay for each day on strike under the onerous Taylor Law. The union was fined \$1 million, a stunning sum for 1980, and as well dues checkoff was lost for a period of time.

The strike caused an irreparable rift between the union, Mayor Koch and many of the City's leading political leaders. City Council President Carol Bellamy angrily told Lawe that "I'll piss on your grave" in a chance meeting after the strike. Lawe would tell the story with a chuckle, but the damage was obvious.

But Lawe was more than a tough talking union

leader. He was a savvy operative in City and State politics and a major figure in Irish-American affairs. He was a powerful supporter of both Gov. Hugh Carey and Gov. Mario Cuomo. He slowly repaired the political damage both inside and outside the union. In the first post-strike election, Lawe's slate won by a stunning 10-1 margin.

In May 1985, Lawe moved on to become the TWU International President and he was succeeded at the Local by Sonny Hall.

In 1987, Lawe was named the Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade reflecting his standing in the Irish community. He and Mayor Koch greeted each other warmly at the parade, seemingly burying the hatchet on the 1980 strike.

John E. Lawe passed away of cancer on January 5, 1989. Thousands attended his funeral St. Patrick's Cathedral. John Cardinal O'Connor eulogized him as "an honest, decent union man."

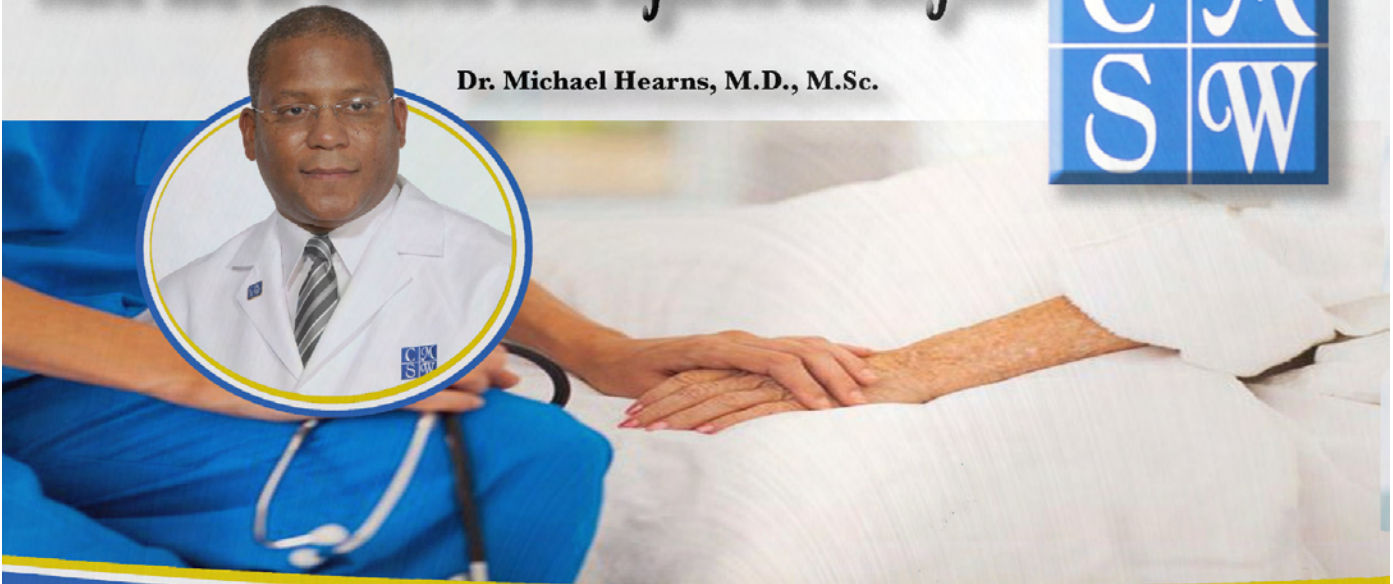
"I'm afraid there are a lot more bus drivers in heaven than there are Cardinals, so maybe I'll never meet him there" Cardinal O'Connor continued. "But I will pray for him and perhaps through him for his wisdom, for his goodness and on behalf of the Archdiocese of New York, I thank his family for being what you have been to him so that he could be what he was to us."



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