



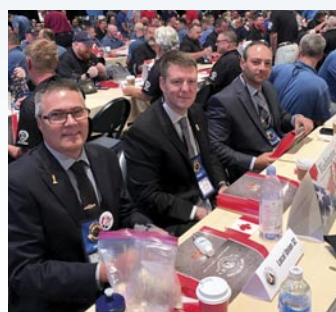
# 32 Connections

## UA LOCAL 32 – 40TH UNITED ASSOCIATION GENERAL CONVENTION SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA



San Diego, CA

August 23-27, 2021



# 32 Connections

## UA Local 32

### Agents and Organizers

Business Manager / Financial Secretary  
Jeffery J. Owen

Dispatcher / Assistant Business Manager  
Ryan Miller

Plumber Agent  
Mike Kunkel

Plumber Agent  
Corey Wilker

Steamfitter / Welder / Shipyards Agent  
TJ Riordan

Refrigeration / HVAC Agent  
Joel Crabtree

PSE / Municipalities Agent  
Kurt Swanson

Mainline / Gas Distribution Agent  
Ernest "JR" Ybarra

Organizer  
Brad Moore

Organizer  
Zachary T. Smith

Organizer  
Chris Hawes

Organizer  
Antonio Cruz

Business Development Specialist  
Leanne Guier



**Seattle Plumbers and Pipefitters  
United Association Local 32**  
597 Monster Road SW  
Renton, WA 98057  
[www.ualocal32.com](http://www.ualocal32.com)  
[www.facebook.com/local32](https://www.facebook.com/local32)  
Instagram: @ua\_local\_32

**Main Office Phone Number:**  
425-277-6680  
**Main Office Fax Number:**  
425-277-7370

Union meetings are the 2nd Thursday of  
every month at 5pm.

Have an article you would like to  
submit? Please contact Tamarra Henley  
by email: [tamarra@ualocal32.com](mailto:tamarra@ualocal32.com) or call:  
425-277-6680.

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facebook

[www.facebook.com/Local32](https://www.facebook.com/Local32)

## BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

By Jeffery J. Owen



Brothers and Sisters -  
**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

I hope you and yours enjoyed the recent Holiday Season. Looking back at 2021, we were faced with many challenges - similar but different, than those in 2020 - and they continue to evolve. I am confident that in 2022, we will continue to work together to face each obstacle as it comes.

As a Local we continue to adjust to both Washington State and individual jobsite COVID-19 requirements. More jobsites are now requiring proof of vaccination, and the same is true of our Fixed Units. While the Local Union encourages and supports the use of vaccines and believes that we should all do our part and get vaccinated. We also recognize and support the members right to choose what is right for themselves and their families.

In the Building Trades, our membership remains fully employed. With the ongoing private work, office buildings, condominiums, Project Labor Agreements

(PLA's), as well as the work we are doing in schools throughout King County, it looks like we won't have much time off in 2022. As of November 2021, the Building Trades members have worked 1.9-million-man hours in the first 5 months of the fiscal year.

Attendance at our Local Union Meetings still requires masks and social distancing. However, virtual meeting attendance is also available. *A link is provided via the Membership Section on our Local 32 website ([www.ualocal32.com](http://www.ualocal32.com)), or you can contact the Business Office for log-in instructions.* We are also sending out email blasts to the membership throughout the month to keep you informed of up-to-date information. These emails include updates on the latest legal updates regarding COVID testing, Shop Steward updates, Health Plan updates, as well as other useful information. If you are not receiving our emails, please call the Business Office to verify that you have the correct email address on file.

In August 2021, our Local Union was represented by 40 delegates at the 40th



General United Association General Convention. One of the notable items shared is that the **UA per capita dues rate will remain unchanged for the next 5 years.** We are preparing to update our Local Union By-laws in the first part of the year, so I encourage you to attend monthly Union Meetings and participate in that process.

Our benefit plans continue to grow and maintain their funding requirements. Throughout the upcoming year we will continue to offer retirement planning and financial planning classes to our members. If you are interested in attending either of these classes, please watch our social media pages or contact the Business Office for more information.

## What to Expect in 2022

Beginning January 1st, 2022, the UA Local 32 Business Office hours will change to **7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** The office will still close for the lunch hour period of 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please make a note of the change to our business hours.

We are currently planning 2022 annual events, most of which we have not been able to enjoy this past two years. We hope to be able to safely hold the Annual Picnic, which is scheduled for July 23rd. We have also set dates for the Old Timers luncheon and Apprentice Banquet. We will keep you notified of the event details as the dates grow closer.

2022 is an election year for our Local Union Officers and other elected officials. **At the May 12th Union Meeting nominations will be held and Elections will take place on June 9th.** The United Association has scheduled a statewide Organizing Campaign for September 2022, and we are doing our part to be fully prepared.

We are working on details to develop and construct our Gas Distribution and Mainline Training Facility in the city of Pacific. In the next few months, we will finalize the building plan and budget.

## In Appreciation

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Local 32 Officers, Executive Board, Finance Committee, PAC Committee, Exam Boards, and all the other members who continue to volunteer their time and effort to ensure the ongoing success of our Local Union. We are a better Local because of your involvement.

Your Executive Board and Finance Committee have continued to meet throughout the year on behalf of the membership.

## Executive Board Officers

President:

Eric Gilbreath

Vice President:

Mike Alvarado

Recording Secretary:

John Hafner

## Executive Board Members

Collin Greene

Jeff Hasselbom

James Hughes

Juan Morfin

## Finance Committee

Jake Jarvis

Mike Hartl

CJ Hensley

Finally, I would like to encourage you to follow our Facebook and Instagram accounts - we make posts about upcoming events, happenings at the Hall, and as new information that affects our membership becomes available. As always, you can reach us at (425) 277-6680.

Fraternally,



**Jeffery J. Owen**

Business Manager, Local 32

Continued on next page

# This isn't your typical doctor's office

At Vera, we care for your whole health—at no cost to you.

A check-up may not be high on your to-do list. But preventive care—things like blood work, health screenings, and immunizations—can help you stay healthy now and address concerns you may face in the future.

At Vera Whole Health, we call this **advanced primary care**. It prioritizes empathy, safety, and time—so we can treat you exactly where you are, with no judgments, no matter your health concerns.

## Earn a \$100 incentive

Complete an Annual Whole Health Evaluation by November 30, 2021, and earn a \$100 gift card. Call the care center at **(206) 337-6080** or make an appointment at [patients.verawholehealth.com](https://patients.verawholehealth.com).

## Advanced primary care:



### Saves you (and your Union) money

Vera care is free to you—and because preventive care creates a healthier community with fewer costly medical needs, it saves Local 32 money, too.



### Gives you more time with your doctor

Longer appointments allow you to ask questions and understand any test results.



### Treats your whole health—not just your symptoms

Your care team works to support you, all of you: not just the physical, but the mental and social as well—to create a plan that addresses your specific needs.



### Connects you with a health coach

Making lifestyle changes can be hard. Your coach takes time to understand your situation and acts as a partner in your health journey.

# How does UA Local 32 work with Vera Whole Health?

Vera was designed with Union members in mind.

## Who can visit a Vera care center?

Thanks to your Union's partnership with Vera, access to your care center is only available to Trust members and their families on the Aetna PPO plan.

## What does it cost to visit a Vera care center?

Your visit to Vera is free to you. And it saves your Local 32 money, too—because healthier members with healthier families have fewer costly medical needs.

## How do I make an appointment?

Visit [patients.verawholehealth.com](https://patients.verawholehealth.com) or call (206) 337-6080. Same-day and next-day appointments are available.

The Fort Dent Tukwila care center is near the UA Local 32 hall, so it's convenient to see a provider before or after a Union meeting. There are also several other care centers throughout the region, should you wish to visit a Vera provider closer to your home.

## How is Vera different from other providers?

Because we value your whole health, not just treating your symptoms, you and your family will have all the time you need with a Vera provider—so you won't be rushed out the door like in a typical healthcare setting. Your entire family can see the same provider, or you can choose different providers for each family member.

The care center is available for:

- physicals
- family planning
- immunizations
- sick care
- health coaching
- virtual care
- on-site lab testing
- on-site pharmacy services



## Care center hours

Monday:	8:30am–6:00pm
Tuesday:	8:30am–6:00pm
Wednesday:	8:30am–6:00pm
Thursday:	8:30am–6:00pm
Friday:	8:30am–6:00pm

## Fort Dent Care Center

6700 Fort Dent Way, Suite 100  
Tukwila, WA 98188

**(206) 337-6080**

[patients.verawholehealth.com](https://patients.verawholehealth.com)

## HEALTH PLAN REPORT

### Vera Whole Health

If you are in the Trust's PPO plan, you are eligible to visit any Vera Whole Health clinic for preventive care, chronic disease management, acute care such as colds, wound care, sprains and strains, urinary tract infections, as well as bonus support services such as health coaching, on-site labs, provider-dispensed medications; specialty care coordination and advocacy, immunizations and COVID-19 testing.

### HEALTH PLAN SUMMARY

Your Health Plan Trustees continue to meet throughout the year to manage the plan. The Labor Health Plan Trustees are Jeffery J. Owen (Chairman), Joel Crabtree, and Mike Kunkel. The Management Health Plan Trustees are Ed Kommers (Secretary), Jerry Bush, and Mark Webster. In 2021, there were four Trustee Meetings which occurred on March 30th, June 22nd, September 21st, and December 14th.

The Health Plan contribution was increased from **\$9.01 per hour to \$9.46 per hour effective January 1, 2022**. This means that the monthly back-out factor increased to \$1,288.00 per month. If you retired in the last 4 years, the retiree contribution rate (which is 50% of the back-out factor) will be adjusted from \$613.00 per month to \$644.00 per month. The adjustment is effective January 2022 for March 2022 coverage.

### HEALTH PLAN CHANGES

Please review the Open Enrollment paperwork you received in the mail in October of 2021. Included in that packet are detailed description of the recent plan changes. Some of the plan changes are summarized below.

#### Vision Plan Changes

Effective January 1, 2022, vision claims will be processed by VSP. Please see the Summary of Material Modification to the Plan document for details.

#### Hearing Aid Benefit

The trustees have approved a new hearing aid benefit of **\$1,500 per ear, every 36 months**. To be covered, hearing aids must be prescribed by a licensed provider to treat a certified hearing loss that will benefit by use of the hearing aid.

### Weekly Disability Benefit

The weekly disability benefit (referred to as the Time Loss benefit in your plan book) was increased from \$500.00 to \$600.00 per week.

### Over Age Disabled Children

The Plan covers children aged 26 and over, as of the date they would otherwise lose coverage if they are incapable of self-sustaining employment by reason of mental or physical handicap. Such incapacity must have commenced prior to the child reaching age 26, and the child must be primarily dependent on the employee or retiree for support. The Plan will continue the coverage for such a child so long as the coverage for the employee or retiree remains in force and such incapacity continues. Proof of such incapacity must be submitted to the Trust Office within 31 days of the date the child's coverage would otherwise terminate. Effective November 1, 2021, the Plan is amended to clarify that the Plan covers children aged 26 and over if, as of the date they would otherwise lose coverage, the child is disabled, the disability arose before the child reached age 26 and as a result of that disability the child is primarily dependent on the employee or retiree for support. For this purpose, disability is defined as a mental or physical condition that is expected to be permanent and continuous for the remainder of the child's life and results in the inability to engage in self-sustaining employment, including one or more of the following: the inability to perform activities of daily living, the inability to engage in normal social functions, the inability to independently complete tasks. Disability does not include conditions that are temporary or where recovery would be expected through treatment.

### Retiree Enrollment and Delayed Enrollment

Effective November 1, 2021, the Plan language was clarified to provide that retiree enrollment must be made within 60 days of when the retiree would otherwise lose Plan coverage, regardless of when the retiree begins receiving pension benefits.

### The No Surprises Act

Is a new law that was part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act. This new law is intended to protect Plan participants from balance billing.



## BENEFICIARY UPDATES

Please make sure your beneficiary information is updated. If you or your spouse has active Plan coverage upon your death, there is a \$10,000 life insurance benefit for you and \$2,000 life insurance benefit for the spouse. Complete Section 2 and Section 7 of the Enrollment form to update. This will revoke all former beneficiary designations, if any, that the Trust Office has on record. **Please Note:** This beneficiary designation only applies to the Health Trust. If you are also a participant in the National Pension Plan, the State Pension Plan, or the Supplemental 401(k) plan, you must update this information with each Trust. Call the Trust Office at 1-888-406-3246 and they can help you with forms applicable to each Trust.

## HEALTH PLAN SUMMARY November 2020-October 2021

- Active/self-pay eligibility remained constant and retiree eligibility increased 1.6%, when compared to the prior period.
- There were 4.7 million hours reported to the Trust for the 12-months ending October 2021 eligibility, increased 2.7% from the prior period.
- Excluding \$3.96 million in claims reimbursable to the Trust under the stop loss contract, net self-funded paid claims totaled \$45.8 million, or 99.6% of the expected amount.
- After adjusting for changes in Trust liabilities and audit adjustments, the 12-month net loss to unallocated reserves

(cost basis) totaled approximately \$2.2 million on an asset cost basis, or \$1.0 million on an asset market value basis.

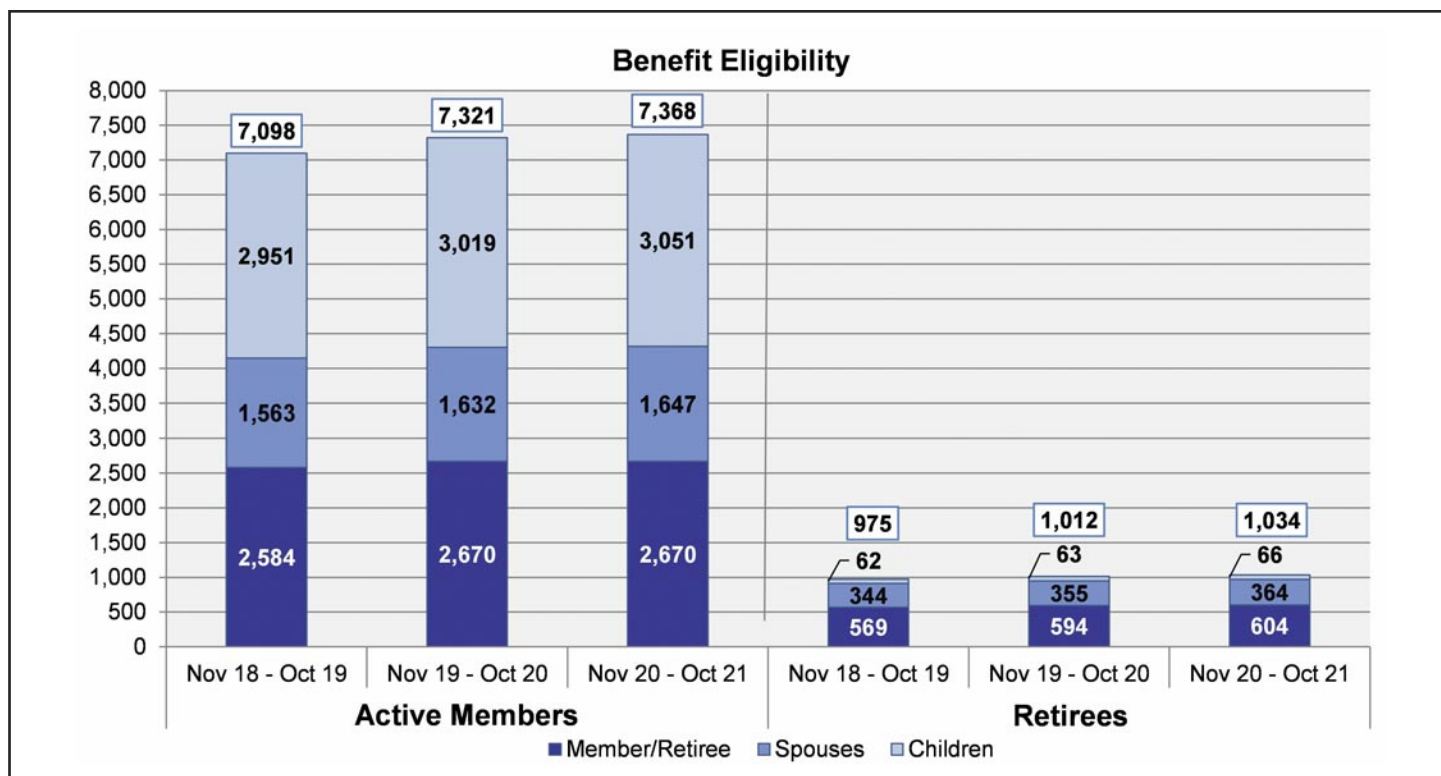
- As of September 30, 2021, the Trust's unallocated assets (cost basis) totaled \$36.7 million, approximately **8 months of 2021/22 projected expenses**.

## Eligibility

The number of **active and self-pay members** eligible each month during the last 12 months (November 2020 - October 2021):

- We have a total of 8,402 plan participants, an increase of 329 plan participants over the previous three years.
- 2,670 active and self-pay members (on average) were eligible each month, which is unchanged from the prior 12 months. An average of 1,647 spouses and 3,051 children were eligible for benefits each month.
- An average of 1,034 retiree individuals were eligible each month.
- An average of 635 members, or 23.8% of the active group, elected medical/Rx benefits through Kaiser. The chart below shows average eligibility over the most recent 36 months by member/retiree, spouses, and children.

The chart below shows average eligibility over the most recent 36 months by member/retiree, spouses, and children.



### Retiree eligibility: During the last 12 months (November 2020 – October 2021):

- An average of 604 retirees/surviving spouses were eligible for benefits each month, an increase of 1.6% over the prior year.
- An average of 52 retirees/surviving spouses, 8.6% of the total, elected coverage through Kaiser.
- An average of 969 total retired individuals (retirees and spouses), were covered during the last 12 months. Of the total, 736 were eligible for Medicare and 233 were not Medicare eligible.

### Hours

During the most recent 12 months (ending with August 2021 hours worked for October 2021 eligibility), a total of 4,734,747 hours were reported to the Trust. This was a 2.7% increase over the total hours reported in the prior 12 months.

### Financial Operations

During the past 12 months, approximately \$57.2 million in income was received and \$58.3 million in expenses were paid, resulting in an operating loss of approximately \$1.1 million.

Please note, as of September 30, 2021, there were no outstanding stop-loss reimbursements.

### Trust Reserves

These are the Trust's income, expenses, assets, and liabilities, as reported by the administrator. As of September 30, 2021, the Trust had total assets of approximately \$62.4 million (unaudited cost basis). Subtracting liabilities of \$25.7 million, this leaves unallocated assets of \$36.7 million; the equivalent of 8.0 months of 2021/22 projected expenses.

### Kaiser

As of October 2021, there were 638 active employees enrolled in the Kaiser self-funded option; approximately 23% of total active employees covered by the Trust. In addition, there were 26 non-Medicare retirees & spouses enrolled in the Kaiser self-funded option, and 56 Medicare retirees and spouses enrolled in the Kaiser fully insured Medicare Advantage option.

### Benefits Specialist

If you need assistance regarding any of our benefit plans our Benefits Specialist, Julie Pock, will advocate on your behalf and get your questions and concerns answered. Please contact her in the Business Office at (425) 277-6680.

## RETIREMENT PLANNING

Are you considering retirement in 2022 or in the next few years? As of this publication date, we have a minimum of 215 members over 59 years of age who are still working. If you are looking toward retirement, we have scheduled an in-person Retirement Seminar for the spring of 2022.

### SAVE THE DATE Saturday, March 26th, 2022

To confirm your attendance, please contact the Business Office to reserve a seat for you and your spouse. Representatives from the following offices will be in attendance:

- UA National Pension
- Washington State Pension Plan
- 401(k)/Supplemental Pension Plan - Milliman
- Retiree Medical Plan

This in-person event is dependent on the status of State and local COVID-19 restrictions and safety protocols at the time. If this large event is postponed, we do plan to continue holding small classes throughout the year. Despite the challenges presented, we were able to hold 8 small classes in 2021.

We wish a hearty *"Congratulations"* to all our members who retired in 2021.

If at any time, you need assistance with a retirement related question or concern, please do not hesitate to contact our Retirement Benefit Specialist - Julie Pock, in the Business Office at (425) 277-6680.





# WELCOME TO THE VSP FAMILY EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2022!



By being a VSP® Vision Care member, it's clear that eye health is important to you. That's great, because we love eyes and want to help you get the most from your vision coverage. When you visit an in-network doctor, you'll get the personalized eye care you deserve and enjoy a wide selection of featured frame brands. At your appointment, just tell them you have VSP. No cards, no forms, it's that simple.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR BENEFITS.

### CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT ON VSP.COM TO...



#### View your in-network coverage

View your coverage details and discover money-saving offers.



#### Find your in-network doctor

Maximize your benefits at a Premier Program location, now including thousands of **private practice doctors** and over 700 **Visionworks retail locations** nationwide. Log in to confirm in-network locations based on your plan type.



#### Enjoy more savings and offers

Get access to more than \$3,000 in savings with **VSP Exclusive Member Extras**.



#### Shop online and connect your benefits

Prefer to shop online? Get contacts, glasses, and sunglasses using your vision benefits on **Eyeconic.com**\*—the VSP preferred online retailer.

## EFFECTIVE 1/1/22, VISIT VSP.COM TO ACCESS YOUR PERSONALIZED BENEFITS!

That's it for now. But if you have any questions, give us a call at **800.877.7195** or visit **vsp.com**.

Thanks for choosing VSP!

**Kate Renwick-Espinosa**  
President, VSP Vision Care

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# PENSION PLAN REPORT

Brothers and Sisters:

Our State Pension continues to improve its funding status. The plan is working as designed, decreasing in liability, and is 110% funded. As of this writing the market is up more than 12% for the 2021 fiscal year.

## Supplemental Pension/401k

In preparing for retirement - in the long or short term - knowing where to access your information is one of the most important tools you can utilize. I encourage you to go to [www.millimanbenefits.com](http://www.millimanbenefits.com) to register and view your account. At this time only 39% of our Local 32 members have set up this account and know their 401k account balance.

The importance of viewing your investments and understanding your options is hard to overstate. Having access to this information will assist you with both your retirement goals and when you have discussions with your financial advisor.

As of November 31, 2021:

- Local 32 members have total assets of \$436.5m (out of the \$538m in the plan); Average is \$121k.
- 3,597 Local 32 members have balances (all statuses - active, terminated, in pay status, etc.)
- Currently, there are 1,941 active and eligible members. 741 actively defer at present.
- Less than 2% of the membership is maximizing their annual contributions as allowed under IRS regulations.
- The 2022 IRS maximum allowed self-contribution rate will be \$20,500. If you are 50 or older, you can defer an additional \$6,500 as a catch-up contribution
- If you need contributions forms, they are available on the Local 32 members only website or at the Business Office.

## Pension Education

In 2021 we began offering bi-monthly classes to help our members understand their pensions better. At the present time, the average Local 32 member's account balance in the Supplemental Pension/401k plan is just \$125,197.00 with an average age of 47. We want every member to have the information necessary to effectively prepare for their future. Please review the class descriptions below and consider attending.

- The Financial Planning Class is designed for newer members and those who have at least 10 years yet to work before retirement. This class provides information about how the Local 32 pensions are funded, how members earn pension credits, and ways to set yourself up for success once you retire. Spouses are welcome to attend.
- The Retirement Seminar is for those who are over 50 years of age, or less than 5 years away from retirement. This Seminar will discuss the funding and function of the National Pension, Washington State Pension, and Supplemental Pension. It also covers how to prepare for your pension application, the rules and eligibility for our Retiree Medical plan, Social Security and Medicare enrollment, and good habits to get into as you move toward retirement. Spouses are welcome (even encouraged) to attend.

If you are interested in joining us for one of these classes, call the Business Office at (425) 277-6680 for upcoming dates and to register.

## Reminders

- Make sure your beneficiary information is updated with ALL plans.
- The current annual pension credit amount for the National and State Pension Plans is between \$135.00 to \$145.00 (combined) dependent on the number of hours you work in a year.
- Self-contribute to your Supplemental Pension Plan.
- Sign up for a "My SSA Account" with Social Security to monitor your account and verify reporting. Go to <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/> to get started.
- Consider consulting with a financial advisor to create a plan for your future.

# The Basics of the Washington State Pension/Milliman SIP

## How a Milliman SIP works

- Contributions fund the benefit earned
- Participant earns a benefit for each year of service
- Hurdle rate, usually set between 4% and 5%
- Liabilities calculated at hurdle rate
- Underlying benefits go up and down based on the plan's actual return on assets for all participants
- Plan stays funded in all market conditions, and in fact, tends to get "over funded" at which point benefits can be increased
- Keeps assets and liabilities in balance by adjusting liabilities
- Cap limits benefit increases in years with particularly high returns
- Stabilization reserve (funded with contributions and further built up in years when the cap is exceeded) used to shore-up benefits when returns are less than the hurdle rate
- High-water-mark benefit paid as long as there are sufficient stabilization reserves
- Stable contributions, stable and rising benefits.

## THE JARGON

### BENEFIT ACCRUAL RATE

The rate (specified in the plan document) used to determine the initial monthly benefit. Absent other factors, a SIP accrual is generally significantly lower than a traditional DB plan accrual rate (because it's designed to grow over time, even in retirement).

### CAP

Maximum annual increase in a participant's accrued benefit. The cap is specified in the plan document and limits benefit increases in particularly good investment years. The portion of investment earnings not "used" to provide a benefit increase (because the increase is limited by the cap) in those years will serve to increase the stabilization reserve.

### HIGH WATER MARK BENEFIT

The highest benefit level ever that participant has been paid.

### HURDLE RATE

Conservative investment assumption (specified in the plan document), generally between 3% and 5%. This is also the rate on which benefit adjustments to "underlying" SIP benefits are based.

### SHORE-UP BENEFIT

A payment equal to the difference between a participant's "high water mark" and underlying SIP benefit that can be paid when the underlying benefit goes down following a market downturn (as long as there are sufficient stabilization reserves).

### STABILIZATION RESERVE

Assets that are used to prevent benefit decreases following market downturns. If the reserve is sufficient, a payment (called a "shore up" payment) equal to the difference between a participant's "high water mark" and underlying SIP benefit can be paid from the stabilization reserve.

## A plan that trustees and participants can support

TRUSTEE ADVANTAGES	PARTICIPANT ADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Provides lifelong income</li><li>▪ Stays fully funded</li><li>▪ Weathers all market conditions</li><li>▪ Stable contributions</li><li>▪ Minimizes withdrawal liability</li><li>▪ Maximizes benefit provided per dollar of contribution</li><li>▪ Reduces the risks of plan maturity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Provides lifelong income</li><li>▪ Doesn't require complex investment decisions</li><li>▪ Automatically shares the benefit of good investment returns</li><li>▪ Provides some inflation protection</li><li>▪ Maximizes retirement benefit provided per dollar of contribution</li></ul>



# Should I invest in a 401(k) or Roth 401(k)?



If you have a choice at work of 401(k) or Roth 401(k), how to choose? Is it based on your overall salary? Overall household income?

As with a Roth IRA, the main considerations for a Roth 401(k) are your income and age. Roth's are more valuable for people in lower income brackets (likely at the beginning of your career), because you invest after-tax money, which then grows tax-free. With a traditional 401(k), you're contributing money before you pay taxes on it, so you must pay up when you take disbursements in retirement.

**If you pick a Roth, then, you're essentially "locking in" your current tax rate,** because you're assuming it will be lower than your retirement rate. That means when you make a withdrawal down the line, you won't pay taxes on the money, whereas with a traditional 401(k), you will.

Both tax schemes are beneficial in different ways. **If you're young, though, a Roth is probably a better option.** "If you're in a lower tax bracket, choose the Roth," says Howard Pressman, a Virginia-based Certified Financial Planner. "A current day tax deduction isn't that valuable to you, so why not enjoy the tax-free growth."

And as we've covered before, tax rates are currently among the lowest they've ever been (and likely will be), meaning it makes more sense to pay today's tax rate than gamble with a higher one—making a Roth a better option. **The tradeoff is that you won't get a tax break now.**

## You need to diversify

That said, another consideration is how much of your savings is currently in tax-deferred accounts like traditional Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) and 401(k)s. If you're over 50, you'd do well to diversify before retirement so that you have the flexibility to withdraw from both taxable and tax-free pools of savings.

Regardless of your choice, any employer contributions will be made pre-tax, says Samuel Boyd, a Washington D.C.-based Certified Financial Planner. "So, in the event that you can't make an educated projection of your tax implications now versus those in the future, making the Roth 401(k) contribution and receiving a traditional 401(k) match will, at the very least, result in tax diversification," says Boyd.

That's one way to attain some diversification. Another would be to direct your catch-up contributions (workers over 50 can contribute an additional \$6,000 into a traditional or Roth 401(k) this year) to after-tax accounts, suggests Marguerita M. Cheng, a Maryland-based CFP. "Clients need tax diversification."

Keep in mind, too, that too much in tax-deferred retirement accounts causes large Required Minimum Distributions when you turn 70+, which in turn raises your tax bracket in retirement, when you can least afford it.

Roth assets, on the other hand, aren't subject to RMDs. "The nice thing about the Roth 401(k) is that you can contribute nearly three to four times more than you can to a Roth IRA, so it's a great option for accumulating that type of savings and will reduce the amount of mandated income at age 70+," says Wes Brown, a Tennessee-based CFP. While Roth IRAs have a contribution limit of \$6,000 this year, you can contribute up to \$19,000 to a Roth 401(k) (and \$7,000 and \$25,000, respectively, if you're over 50).

Both types of accounts have a place in a robust retirement plan. If you're young or already have a large pool of tax-deferred savings, then go with the Roth.

# PLUMBERS' AGENT REPORT

By Mike Kunkel



Brothers and Sisters,

Happy New Year to you and your families. As we say good riddance to 2021, it is a good time to note that our Local has been blessed with so much work. Although this past year has been filled with adversity and uncertainty, we have worked an incredible number of hours. This has certainly presented some challenges but the

membership of Local 32 has addressed them head on.

**Building Trades Projects** – There are some huge projects that have just finished or are in progress, as well as many other towers.

Hermanson just finished the Climate Pledge Arena. This project had a crew size of 45, and they worked 130,000 hours. The plumbers installed a rainwater catchment system that treats the water so it can be used to make the ice for the hockey rink. Even with the aggressive schedule, complexity of the job, and following Covid protocols, they had no safety incidents.



*The Hermanson Superflush Crew flushed all the toilets at once to make sure there were no issues. Pictured are: Arcenio Valencia; Noel Burbridge; Aaron Pishue; Michael O Grady; Shance Fuller; Dennis Kirchan; Chris Tice; Joe Crews; Mark McCue; Vincent Kay; Marcus Clark; Abdoulaye Kabre; Natalie Anderson; Cody Clark; Maxwell McCrackin; Tagoai (JR) Tamotu; Mike Potts; Trevor Ottwell; Michael Halbert; Joseph Roberts; Beau-Daniel Swan; Ron Newman; Andrew Ditzel; Mark McCue; Eric Talley; Anthony Rogers; Noel Galvin*



Auburn Mechanical is continuing the plumbing at the Washington State Convention Center. They have employed up to 56 plumbers so far. This job will have over 171,000 linear feet of plumbing, serving 900 fixtures, inside the 1.49 million square feet of the project.

Apollo Mechanical, MacDonald Miller, Hermanson, McKinstry, Vet First and Auburn Mechanical are continuing to work the Microsoft project in Redmond. The project footprint is 72 acres, with 16 buildings, as well as a 25-acre parking garage. Inside the garage, Apollo is plumbing a 60,000 square foot kitchen that will serve the campus.



*Rainwater Catchment Tank (left to right) – Steve Johnson, Joel Stillings, and Paul Deines securing a 9,000 gallon rainwater catchment tank.*

The projects listed above all have rainwater collection systems that either provide water for the Hockey Arena Ice or water for flushing toilets. HB 1184 addresses on-site treatment and reuse of non-potable alternate water sources for non-

Continued on next page



potable use. More of this work is coming our way, so educate yourself on these systems.

Work looks good for the immediate future. Keep up to date on your licenses and certifications. With the expansion of the housing and office markets, more people will continue to move to the Puget Sound area and hospital work looks to follow.

**The 2021 UA Convention** – I was fortunate enough to be elected to represent Local 32 at last year's 2021 UA Convention. There were 258 UA locals represented, and the Local 32 delegation was a true representation of the great membership we have. At the convention, various laws, resolutions, and by-laws were presented and debated. One of the highlighted speakers was Gary Sinise who spoke about the charitable foundation he established which helps first responders and veterans.

**Carpenters Strike** – The carpenters strike was conducted in a less than stellar way – very differently than it should have been. While it may have been a disorganized mess, there were some great takeaways. Local 32 showed great strength and solidarity, and the industry noticed. It also showed us that we need to always be prepared for the time when work will slow down. As the saying goes, plan for the worst and hope for the best.

**Safety** – The holidays can be hard on many as we remember those who we have lost or cannot be with at this time of year. Take time to check on loved ones, and even those we just like a little. We need everyone to be healthy and present on the jobsites to work hard, to go home safe, and to show the customer that they made the correct choice by selecting Local 32 to help complete their projects.

**Trustee** – I attended the New Trustee Conference and followed that up with more trustee classes back in October. This was an educational event that reinforced what I had already known going in: Local 32 is in a great position going into the future. Our health plan, pension plans, and JATC are in a class of their own compared to the other trust plans throughout the country. Below are a few key takeaways from the conference:

Do not delay a visit to the doctor! Health experts expect the cost of healthcare to rise in the following years due to people delaying routine checkups. These delays mean that illnesses have the potential to develop into more advanced and difficult-to-treat stages because they are not caught early on.

**Our Pension Plans** – The National, State, and Supplemental 401k – can set us up for a comfortable retirement. The State SIP plan is starting to catch on throughout the country, but we are well ahead of the pack. Plan on attending an upcoming financial planning class so you can understand how to maximize your future.

**Plumbing Law, RCW 18.106** – As I am sure you have heard on the radio or seen on TV, many companies are trying to hire plumbers. To perform (or even advertise) plumbing work in the State of Washington, companies must have a plumbing contractor's license which requires a licensed full-time plumber to be on the payroll.

I have previously reported the diligence of L&I in tracking down non-licensed people doing the work of a plumber. This has continued to gain momentum, and all of us will benefit if there are only contractors who follow the rules. Please continue to educate the masses, and let them know that working out of compliance with this law is a finable offense not only for any person doing the work, but also the company they work for.

**Code Updates** – Local 32 has been hosting the quarterly L&I Plumbers Advisory Board meetings at the Hall. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the new plumbing laws. L&I has been working through their growing pains regarding PSI administering the state plumbing test. They are aware of the problems and addressing them. Please reach out to me with any questions.

As a reminder, plumbers will need 24 CEU's to renew their plumbing license; however, that will be every three years instead of every two.

**Fixed Units** – Negotiations are wrapping with the fixed units of King County and Seattle Housing Authority. There are open positions for plumbers with the King County FMD group, King County Parks, King County Airport and the Plumbing Inspector group.

In closing Brothers and Sisters, please prepare yourselves for the future. Whether it is creating your own rainy-day fund, saving for retirement, or just making yourself a stronger/better person. Make some personal goals for this year, and let's attack 2022 with the same fortitude that we used to take on 2021.

Sincerely,

**Mike Kunkel**  
Plumbing Agent





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tips and recipes, parenting advice, legal forms, and more.*



# ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER/ DISPATCHER REPORT

By Ryan Miller

Brothers and Sisters,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a chance to reflect on 2021 and spend

much needed time with family and friends over the holidays!

Another year has passed, and we continued to face COVID-19 hurdles. Even with those challenges, we still managed to set a record of 4.5 million labor hours worked for the 2020-21 fiscal year. We also filled more than 1700 Building Trades dispatches, which was nearly double the number from the previous year. 2022 also appears likely to continue at a record setting pace, potentially reaching a five- consecutive-year record of more than 4 million labor hours worked in a fiscal year. So, it looks as though Building Trades work will be very busy starting the middle of the first quarter, gaining momentum into Summer 2022. That work should keep Local 32 members at full employment through most of the year, with a few peaks and valleys along the way. Microsoft and many other projects are already progressing, with many others set to start, including more school projects being awarded to our signatory contractors. Seattle, Bellevue, Redmond, and the surrounding areas continue to thrive with upcoming potential work for our members.

COVID-19 has changed, and will continue to change, the way Medical Facilities conduct business. This, in turn, creates more opportunities for our members to build new, renovate, and maintain building systems in hospitals into the future. For example, Harborview Hospital has been granted a 1.74-billion-dollar bond to upgrade their current facility. The project includes a \$925 million medical tower building; \$248 million in seismic upgrades for the Harborview Center Tower; \$178 million to renovate existing buildings; \$146 million for site and other improvements; \$108 million for respite beds and seismic improvements to Harborview Hall; and \$20 million for seismic upgrades to the Pioneer Square Clinic.

Swedish Hospital is also moving forward with renovations and expansion. The scope of the project includes construction of an adjoining six-story, 130,000 sq. ft., New Patient Tower on the northwest side of the hospital adjacent to the existing

emergency room facility. The tower will accommodate 30 cardiology beds and an adjoining proposed expansion will house cancer patients. Expected completion for the New Patient Tower is some time in 2023. Already completed renovations to Swedish include the lobby, patient rooms, the burn center, surgical robotics to women surgery, additional floors, upgrades to the NICU and four floors of the hospital's existing ten-story patient tower.

It is important for our members to focus on this sector of work. All hospitals have medical gas systems that require a Washington State Medical Gas Certification to install. Our membership should prepare themselves and take advantage of the training the JATC has to offer this spring. As we get more information and dates of construction, we will discuss the number of qualified Med-Gas installers the projects will demand at Local 32 monthly meetings.

The Local 32 Light Commercial industry has unfortunately taken the brunt of the impact from COVID. Lumber prices soared and light commercial jobs were put on hold, in some cases indefinitely. For those members working in this industry, opportunities should start to increase as we approach Spring. Even though some projects slid out, a few are getting ready to ramp up as framing is moving in the right direction. Your Local 32 Organizers and Agents continue to work toward new contractors and with our current signatory contractors to support the needed growth of this industry. In the New Year we plan to look at all opportunities to gain market share and keep as many members working Light Commercial as possible.

In closing, I would like to thank every Local 32 member who puts on their boots everyday and upholds the UA Standards of Excellence. And I'd like to encourage our UA Journeymen to keep looking to better yourselves. I'd also ask that you help teach our Apprentices and new Affiliates the importance of our heritage, what we stand for, and our pride in becoming the best mechanic you can be. Have a safe 2022!

Faternally,

**Ryan Miller**

Assistant Business Manager



# STEAMFITTERS' REPORT

By TJ Riordan

Hello Brothers & Sisters,

I hope this finds you all healthy & well. It's hard to believe that a year has already gone by since I came into the Business Office. I am committed to working as hard

as I can to represent our groups, work with our contractors, and grow our industry. Thank you for your continued support.

## Grievance

A non-signatory contractor was awarded a 5-phase project at West Point Treatment Plant replacing the liquid sludge gas lines on the digesters; work began last June. Brother Corey Wilker and I made a visit to the jobsite and found a Laborer and Carpenter installing fabrication for a non-signatory subcontractor that was assigned all the welding for the project. Working through the grievance process, we were able to put two of our members to work performing the pipe installation and had the Laborer and Carpenter removed from the project. The non-signatory welding company signed a one-job agreement, their welders were dispatched through our Hiring Hall and paid appropriately.

## Fabrication

Brothers and Sisters, be mindful of what the Collective Bargaining Agreement states, Under Article IV - Fabrication and Field Work, Section 2; "The Employer shall have the right to purchase and/or furnish standard catalog items and/or components that are not custom made and are regularly carried as stock items by the suppliers. These items are still subject to the unloading, handling, and installation requirements set fourth elsewhere in this Agreement. This Section excludes all pipe other than standard full lengths." We have had multiple issues with our employers regarding this language. We are all responsible for following the language in the CBA. Custom-made, purchased prefabricated skids take wages and benefits out of your wallet and away from your family.

## Technology

As schedules and budgets tighten, we are seeing new technologies being used by our employers. This new technology can take many forms - from assisting with layout or installation to tracking metrics for how much time it takes to complete a given task. If you have been approached to use a new form of technology to perform your tasks, please contact the Business Office, there may be impacts that we need to bargain first.

## Shipyards

Unfortunately, this year we saw the closure of Foss Shipyard. However, all the members who were employed at Foss were able to go to work for another yard or are working to transition to the Building Trades. Contract negotiations are on-going with Vigor Shipyard, and we are hopeful we will have a fair contract to present to those members soon.

## Social Media

Social media has become a necessary tool in our lives, which is both good and bad. We all saw the impacts, both positive and negative, that social media had with other trades contract negotiations this year. Official Local 32 business is handled at the Union meetings. If you are unsure or have questions about anything you read or see on any social media platform concerning Local 32, please contact the Business Office and your Agent directly.

Brother & Sisters, I hope you all had a wonderful Holidays and wish you all the best in the New Year!

Fraternally,

**TJ Riordan**

Steamfitter Business Agent





# REFRIGERATION / HVAC REPORT

*By Joel Crabtree*

Well, Brothers and Sisters, here we are, looking at another new year. Unfortunately, it feels like we've been stuck in a rinse and repeat cycle recently, and with the threat of the new

Omicron variant circling the globe it seems the optimism of last New Year is very much in flux. Even so, I am looking to the future with optimism! Our contractors have stayed busy throughout the majority of the pandemic, and there appears to be a lot more construction work coming down the line. All those new buildings will provide our HVAC/R group good, family-wage jobs servicing and maintaining them for many years to come. We are also very hopeful that the future will bring loosened restrictions on our lives, getting us back to something close to normal. These last couple of years have been trying for all of us, and people are feeling the added stress. Please check in with those around you - family, friends, and our UA brothers and sisters. And if you feel yourself getting to the end of your rope, please reach out for help.

We are also in the midst of a serious labor shortage with multiple contractors looking for skilled, licensed mechanics. This has created a bit of a shuffle with some of our members some of whom are looking to other companies with better opportunities for growth. And contractors are not only looking for foremen and journeymen but also looking to fill entry- and mid-level positions as well. If you know any young people looking for excellent, lifelong careers, help them to connect with Local 32 by having them contact me or any of our Organizers to learn about these great opportunities.

Brother PJ Moss, the Apprenticeship Training Coordinator, and I have been meeting with our four refrigeration contractors over the last few weeks in hopes of attracting more interest in part time teaching at the apprenticeship center. We need more (SME's) or Subject Matter Experts, who would like to teach alongside the full-time apprentice instructors. Subject Matter Experts bring in up-to-the-minute perspective on new equipment and building systems, pushing our apprentice training to much higher technical levels. With



the new block training model teaching is no longer a two-night-a-week commitment, but rather would require you to be here during daytime hours for just a few days over the course of a year. The pay is good and, speaking as a former instructor, I very much enjoyed the exposure to the new



*Jeff Rosso in the middle of a Carrier rebuild.*

generation of HVAC & Refrigeration members. I believe I got as much or more out of my time as an instructor as I gave to the students. If you are interested in getting involved, please give me or PJ a call to discuss the possibilities.

In closing, our industry has continued growth throughout the pandemic, and our HVAC & Refrigeration Service Group membership numbers have been increasing with no end in sight. Again, if you know any open shop mechanics or young people looking for a career with the highest wages and benefits in the industry, please direct them to me or Local 32's Organizing Department.



*Brendon Thorstad and Zack Burgy changing out a bank of compressors on RTU*

Fraternally yours,

**Joel Crabtree**

HVAC/Refrigeration Business Agent  
UA Local 32

## PLUMBERS' AGENT REPORT

By Corey Wilker



Happy New Year Brothers and Sisters! I hope this newsletter finds you and your families happy and healthy. I think we are all hoping for 2022 to be the year we reach the "Post Pandemic" era.

### Work Outlook

Our commercial members have been working at full employment for most of 2021 despite setbacks from COVID-

19 vaccine requirements and the normal ebb and flow of jobsites. The economy looks strong, and in this new year Local 32 will be getting our share of ongoing and upcoming work.

- The Port plans to spend **3.3 billion dollars** on 140 projects at the Main Terminal over the next 5 years.
- The Seattle School District is spending **1.4 billion dollars** on 21 new schools.
- Harborview will be spending **1.74 billion dollars** on new construction and renovation.
- Sound Transit is currently spending **4.2 billion dollars** for ongoing and upcoming stations.

### SSD, POS, and Covid 19

Seattle Public Schools and The Port of Seattle have been bargaining with the Seattle Building Trades over the impacts of the vaccine mandate since the governor's proclamation in

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August. Neither organization moved much regarding the deadlines for proof of vaccination. These negotiations were useful to the Local because we were able to see the trends regarding COVID vaccination and mandatory site conditions, and keep our members informed as things developed. On the November 15th deadline at the Port, they posted that 93.8% of 2000 employees had shown proof of vaccination. The Seattle Schools have interpreted that the vaccine requirement is only necessary when workers will be in proximity to students and staff. So far, the only school job that has the mandatory vaccine requirement from SSD is Lincoln High School remodel. The other school jobs may or may not have vaccine requirements depending on the rules from the GC. This is good news for our members that have chosen not to get the vaccine as it may provide an opportunity for work on some of the upcoming school projects.

### JATC

Things continue to move forward with Block Training. Feedback has been positive overall, and the instructors are making changes, when necessary, to improve the actual training. The subject matter experts we have interviewed have been very positive about their experiences. The opportunity to spend enough time to really push the intended lesson and share knowledge with the apprentices is going to make a big difference to the quality of our training.

### WA State Code Council

We are currently moving through the process to approve the Energy Code. There are some proposals banning the use of natural gas and we will be able to voice our opposition during the upcoming public comment phase. The Plumbing Code Technical Advisory Group will begin in early 2022 for the approval of the 2021 UPC. These items progress slowly (actually "glacial" would describe it better), so there will be more updates at future union meetings.

### Events and Adventures

The MCAA Leadership Conference was hosted in Seattle this year. We had many Local 32 members in attendance for this informative and interactive event. I would also like to express my thanks to the membership for electing me to be a delegate at the 40th UA National Convention. The experience was, honestly, pretty cool. The UA put on quite a show and we met

other UA members from all over the USA. A special thanks to Brother Dan Jensen for helping all of us newbies through our first convention.

### Stewards

In closing, I would like to acknowledge our job stewards for the work you do every day on behalf of the membership. It is a thankless job sometimes, and your efforts make the job a better place to work for everyone, including the other trades, so... THANK YOU!! Here's hoping we all have a successful 2022 together!

Fraternally Yours,

**Brother Corey Wilker**



*Left to Right: JR Ybarra, Dan Jensen, and Ryan Miller at the 40th UA Convention.*



# ORGANIZING REPORT

By Brad Moore, Zachary T. Smith,  
Chris Hawes and Antonio Cruz



2021 has been nothing less than challenging, to say the least. We started the year with the prospect of ending COVID-19 restrictions, restarting the economy and a return to normalcy. Instead, we continue the tease of ending COVID-19, the economy is like stop and go traffic and it's been so long. Does anyone know what normal is anymore? That's why we, the Organizing Department at UA Local #32 just wanted to start off by saying "Thank You" During this season of celebrating our families and the things for which we are most thankful, the organizing team is grateful for the strong work outlook for our membership and the industry. We are thankful for our brothers and sisters that get up each day, strap up their boots and go to work, rain or shine, hot or cold. We appreciate the pride our members take in being a Local #32 member. It's our members that make us the local we are and it's because of our members that we can attract more like-minded individuals. In a time where skilled labor is in short supply, qualified candidates have their choice of where they go and what they do. We are proud of the fact that our applicant lists are full, and we still have people reaching out to join this local daily. It speaks volumes about our members, and we simply wanted to take a moment and once again say "Thank You".

As COVID begins to turn loose of the economy, we have seen new permit applications and contractors are submitting new bids on upcoming work. Anticipating what's coming. We have been working tirelessly to capitalize on this positive work



forecast to expand our market share, grow our membership, and broaden our labor market within the mechanical industry.

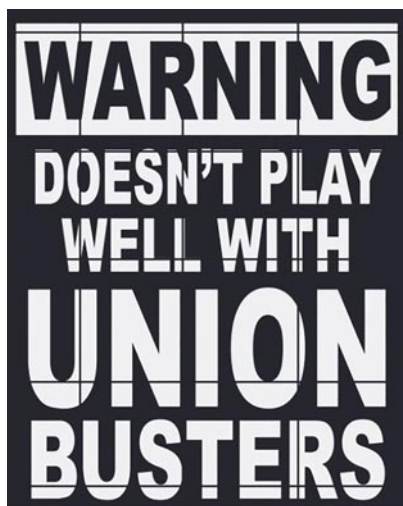
Earlier this year, the WSA, working in conjunction with brothers Ed Holmes, Mike Kunkle and Brad Moore successfully passed comprehensive plumbing legislation that has effectively

changed the way the plumbing industry is regulated. Because the legislation has now become law. Brad Moore has been able to assist the Washington State Association and Labor and Industries in the fight to combat the blatant violation of licensing and supervision requirements. Brad has invested a significant amount of time and resources to maintaining pressure and enforcement focus on Trademark plumbing, as they currently lack the required licensed journeyman to legally perform the work they are doing and are unfairly competing against our signatory contractors. Through Brad's efforts. Trademark Plumbing was contacted by L&I's enforcement division on more than seven jobsites in one day. Reportedly, there were several violations noted by L&I on each site and further action is pending. This pressure is the driving force behind the recent discussions with Trademark. Without Brad's efforts, there is a good chance Trademark wouldn't have even given the UA the time of day. Well, done sir.

In addition to Brad's enforcement efforts. Brad has been actively searching for the elusive PLO1. It should come as no surprise that this is becoming a seeming impossible task. That

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being said, Brad and Antonio will continue to search high and low, using the internet, parts houses, word of mouth and any other effective means to locate qualified talent. If you have any leads at all, please direct them to the organizing department or contact us and we will get in touch with them.



During the last six months we made a conscious decision to focus specifically on service plumbing, in addition to all our other Building Trades Plumbing needs. With that, it was decided to have a changing of the guard, so to speak. We said goodbye to Howard Ferguson and thanked him for a tremendous body of work. Howard's contribution to this local will be felt for decades to come. We simply can't thank him enough.

In September we welcomed brother Antonio Cruz. Antonio comes to the organizing department with an exceptionally strong plumbing service background, having built Auburn Mechanicals' Plumbing Service department from scratch. With strong interest and commitment from our contractors, the organizing department has worked diligently to streamline the process for identifying, vetting, and providing new service plumber mechanic candidates. (SPMs). The business office and the training center have been working in concert to support this effort and we are very excited to see this market develop new opportunities for our members.

Zac and Chris continue to hunt for qualified candidates. The search for such individuals has becoming increasingly more difficult, but after some exit poll surveys and some extensive investigating. What we have come to conclude is. The average hourly pay per hour for an open shop mechanic has risen to nearly that of union scale. Now, it's clear that the benefits still fall short and not all mechanics are receiving the same level of pay, but the top-level mechanics are finally being paid what they are worth. Consequently, they are not easily enticed to move from a comfortable spot. This is a good

problem to have. What it means is, our contractors are now even more competitive than they were before and the working conditions for all workers have improved. That's whole point of a union, right?

The MES program continues to provide growth and positive momentum for the industry. We have been able to simultaneously provide much needed manpower to our existing contractors and simultaneously apply pressure to the open shops. So much such, several have begun to strongly consider the possibilities of becoming signatory to our labor agreement. We have been spending time at Perry technical College, Bates Technical College, Clover Park Technical College and Bellingham Technical College. Most recently we have been invited to attend the P.A.C. meeting at the newly opened UEI trade school in Tacoma. We are committed to partnering with



these programs to encourage their top graduates to consider opportunities with our contractors and our apprenticeship program. Another benefit gained from strengthening these relationships has been the invitation to participate in the creation and implementation of their plumbing curriculum. We will use this opportunity to ensure that the plumbing curriculum is based on the Uniform Plumbing Code

and IAPMO standards. We want to take every opportunity to stop the proliferation of the IPC or any alternative standards that would hurt our industry or public health.

In summary, the Organizing Department at UA Local #32 would like to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best Wishes

Faternally,

**Organizing Department UA #32**



## Seattle Area Pipe Trades APPRENTICESHIP

Another year of apprentice success... and another year we could not celebrate in person. While we're all saddened by not hosting a graduation banquet for 2020 and 2021 apprentices, we've discovered innovative ways to highlight their achievements. This year, United Association Local 32 (UA 32) and the Mechanical Contractors Association of Western Washington (MCAWW) joined forces with Seattle Area Pipe Trades to send all graduates gift boxes. These boxes included their certificate of completion, donated gifts from Fluke, DeWalt and Milwaukee, information to order special SAPT graduate t-shirts, and instructions to receive their UA 32 graduation watches. UA 32 and MCAWW jointly donated VISA gift cards to the graduates and their families.

This gesture was a hit! We received calls, photos and social media messages thanking everyone for the recognition. Here we've featured some of the fun pictures of apprentices and their families opening their graduation boxes:

SAPT also featured weekly Facebook posts to honor the 2021 Achievement Award recipients during October and November 2021. These four exceptional individuals made a positive impact in the apprenticeship, and we are certain they will continue to make a mark in our union and contractor community. They are:

### Jorge Vaca, 3rd Year Residential Apprentice



Jorge is a dedicated, kind person who his classmates respect immensely. When asked what he enjoys most about his work, he said without hesitation, "everything!" He is grateful for apprenticeship, having previously worked in non-union foundries and ironwork.

A friend suggested he apply to a non-union plumbing position, and he got the job. He enjoyed the scope of plumbing work but appreciates it even more as a

United Association Local 32 member. Jorge especially enjoys working for SJS, saying everyone he works with is friendly and helpful. He especially credits his friend and classmate, Wyatt Walstad, for helping him when they entered the apprenticeship, and full-time instructor Armando Villalobos, who he says is patient and takes the time to thoroughly explain plumbing concepts and code.

Jorge is the proud father of 20 year old Jorge Luis, who attends the University of Washington, and 18 year old Alejandra, who attends Federal Way High School. He credits his wife, Mayra, for supporting him through apprenticeship and always being open and positive. When he is not working, Jorge loves being outdoors, especially hiking in Washington's state and national parks.

### Dan Hayes, 5th Year HVAC/Refrigeration Apprentice



Dan turned out of his program in April 2021 and joined the SAPT team as a part-time Subject Matter Expert. In this role, he has support Boiler training for 4th year apprentices. It's no surprise that Dan made the quick jump to instruction. When asked what he enjoys most about his job, Dan

replied "I enjoy being called in to fix or figure out a problem that someone else could not fix. I have worked so hard learning my craft, it is very satisfying to be a go-to guy."

Dan's circuitous career path to apprenticeship is remarkable. He served 8 years in the US Army as an Infantryman, which included two tours in Iraq. When he initially transitioned from the military, he started to pursue a degree in nursing. He specifically wanted to support veterans he encountered in the Veterans' Administration health care system who were dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder. He discovered the nature of the work was not a good fit, but his desire to serve others still compelled him to find a career that supported the well-being of people. He met a HVAC technician who explained how he had started at 32, and Dan decided to apply. While waiting for the opportunity, he earned a certificate of completion from Renton Technical College's Major Appliance

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& Refrigeration Technology program. Eventually, he organized into UA 32 and transferred into the apprenticeship in 2018.

Dan credits his wife Erin and their two sons, Tyler and Adam, for their support while he transitioned from military service to the service work he now performs. "My wife and I talked quite a bit about what type of career would be best for our family. I still make a difference for my community."

As someone who strives to be at the top of his craft, his advice to future apprentices matches that high-level motivation. "Stick with it. There will be times you are in the field, frustrated, banging your head against the wall...but be stubborn and stay the course. When you are a journeyman, no one will be saving you from what you can't do. Get comfortable with being uncomfortable."

### **Jerame Jacobs-Tibig, 5th Year Steamfitter Apprentice**



Jerame didn't come to Seattle Area Pipe Trades with much mechanical background, but his exposure to McKinstry professionals while working in the Puget Sound Pipe warehouse piqued his interest. "The guys would talk about their trade and encourage me to apply. What I learned from that experience drew me into

a lifelong career path."

Jerame says everyone he's worked with during his apprenticeship has shaped his career. "I have been fortunate to work with many great people along the way. By the time I was in my 2nd year of the program, I really started assessing how I handled myself, because this was my first real career. I knew I had to have a serious mindset and soak up knowledge and experience from the people around me."

It is that mindset that brings Jerame the most satisfaction in his craft. "I love being able to take ownership of my work - even the small tasks. I take pride in producing a great product. It is super gratifying to see a job finished and well done." In fact, it is this sense of ownership in work that Jerame would encourage new apprentices to embrace. "Challenge yourself. Test how far you can go and learn. Find yourself, your limits and muscle through the discomfort, because you may find

something you really enjoy." Jerame plans on sharing this sentiment when he assists with part-time instruction in the near future.

### **Juan Perez, 5th Year Commercial Plumber Apprentice**



When Juan Perez was asked, "What do you enjoy most about your job?", he responded, "variety!" He appreciates the wide range of projects a plumber may encounter, saying "no two days are the same, and it keeps you on your toes. You can continually learn new techniques that become part

of your portfolio."

Juan brought significant skills he had gained as a mechanic at SeaTac Airport. He started there as a Baggage Handler, but diligently pursued better opportunities that suited his love of all things mechanical, especially cars. In fact, before he became an apprentice, he worked on all levels of motorized and non-motorized equipment, and sometimes in emergent situations on tarmacs! Juan feels the most important skill he can always apply to the plumbing profession is troubleshooting and problem solving.

Juan is tremendously thankful for all of his apprentice peers. Over the years, they formed study groups, helped each other with homework or work issues on the job. "These are my friends for life." On October 9, Juan married his long-time girlfriend, Lindey, and they are expecting their first child in March 2022. He credits his new wife for her unwavering support during his apprenticeship.

Juan's advice to any new apprentice is this: be observant. "There are many things happening around you on the job - some things dangerous, some things subtle. You need to pay attention at all times and do everything you can to keep up with work and learning."

All the 2021 Achievement Award Recipients were invited to be honored at the November 11, 2021, UA 32 Union Meeting. SAPT also announced the 2021 Apprentice of the Year recipient, who we are proud to announce is Jerame Jacobs-Tibig!

# LOCAL 32 GAS DISTRIBUTION TRAINING REPORT

By Dan Fink

Throughout the year 2021, our Local Union and its members have been presented with many challenges both as individual members and as a collective unit. As we are adapting to ever changing environments in both our work and home lives, Local 32 Gas Distribution Training has been no exception to these challenges. Even with the uncertainty and restrictions that the COVID-19 virus has added to our daily lives, Gas Distribution Training has once again had a busy year. As of Dec. 1st, 542 members have come in for either Operator Qualification (OQ) classes or Group/Individual training for a total of 2,372 training hours. The OQ classes that were conducted by Gas Distribution Training this year include New Gas Helper, Outside Gas Leakage Investigation, PE Fusion, Setting Regulator Delivery Pressure, Intermediate and Low-Pressure Line Stopping, as well as Journey Level Fitter and Welder classes.

Annual OQ classes play a major role in the yearly Gas Distribution Training plan. In 2020, due to COVID restrictions, our Annual OQ classes were mainly held in the Local 32 Union Hall. It was decided to take the same course of action in 2021. Our Annual OQ classes were held with a maximum of 10 attendees per scheduled class to try to minimize the exposure to Covid-19. Gas Distribution members must attend OQ classes annually to keep their Classification Qualifications current, with their Annual Qualifications expiring yearly on October 28th. To keep that time commitment in 2021, we offered classes on Tuesdays, Thursdays and on Saturdays for the members that could not make it on weeknights. With all the challenges in scheduling and specific restrictions this year, I am proud to announce that all our Gas Distribution members were able to re-qualify their Annual OQ Tasks by the October 28th deadline. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to our Local 32 Gas Distribution and Mainline Business Agent JR Ybarra, as well as the part time instructors that came in to help ensure that we met our deadline. Also, we were able to complete this task without any reported COVID exposures relevant to our OQ classes, which is a testament to the Gas Distribution members and their loved ones for taking care of themselves and their community.

Gas Distribution Training classes that were not OQ related in 2021 included: Gas Distribution Overview, Beginning and Advanced PE Pipe Fusion, Steel and PE Hot Tapping, Steel Main Line Stopping, Gas Meter Set Assembly Installation and Piping, PE Electrofusion, Checking and Setting Regulator Delivery Pressure, and Oxy-Acetylene (BOA) Welding. These classes can be held in either a group setting with multiple Instructors or can be requested by a Gas Distribution member who wants to come in to Gas Distribution Training to improve their knowledge, skills, and ability in one or more Gas Fitter task(s). Listed below is a breakdown of the Local 32 Gas Distribution 2021 training year:

## Operator Qualification

Members Attending - **304**      Total Training Hours - **1457.0**

## Training

Members Attending - **238**      Total Training Hours - **915.0**

In early November, myself and Brother JR Ybarra had the privilege of being invited up to UA Local 375 in Fairbanks Alaska to attend and observe the Annual Pipeline Training being conducted at the Fairbanks Pipeline Training Center. The training is a joint effort between UA Local 375, Teamsters, Operators and Laborers and is extremely well organized and executed. While attending the training sessions, we were able to observe large diameter steel pipeline installation, production pipeline installation, as well as maintenance activities including a pipeline bypass. All the training is conducted outdoors on a 50-acre property provided by the Pipeline Training Center. I also took advantage of the opportunity to tour the Pipeline Training Center, the Weld Shop located on the property, the Trainee Camp, the Alyeska Pipeline Maintenance and Operations Shop and the UA Local 375 Training Center. The visit to Local 375 came at an opportune time, as UA Local 32 is starting the design and development process on the Distribution/Pipeline Training Center located at our property in Pacific.

Looking to the 2022 training year ahead, we have a Fuser Preparations Class scheduled for the first week in January, and shortly after that we will start conducting Annual OQ Classes. Classes to be conducted in 2022 include: New Gas Helper OQ, Fuser Prep OQ, Outside Leakage Investigation, both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Journeyman Maintenance Training, Advanced Hot Tapping, Advanced Hydraulic PE Fusion and Electrofusion, Oxy-Fuel (BOA) Welding and Gas meter Set Assembly Installation and Protection. We are also prepared to assist in any Gas Distribution Training needs that members may have, so please contact me with any special or individualized training requests.

In conclusion, Gas Distribution Training has faced and overcome many challenges in 2021. Looking ahead, we are striving to expand and improve the Gas Distribution training offered in 2022 and are committed to leading the way when it comes to qualifying, training, and developing Gas Distribution Helpers and Journeymen in 2022 and beyond. Please drop by and see me in Room 104 at the UA Local 32 Training Center in Renton or email me at danfink@ualocal32.com with any comments or suggestions. Here's to a prosperous 2022 for UA Local 32 and all its members!

Fraternally,

**Dan Fink**

Gas Distribution Training Specialist - Local 32



# GAS DISTRIBUTION & PIPELINE *REPORT*

By JR Ybarra



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Local 32 Pipeline members, both Distribution and Mainline have had a busy year of work, changes, obstacles. Even with the current shortsighted views, our Local Union members have kept the Energy moving for the contractors, clients, and consumers. The idea that our infrastructure will be able to

transition at the drop of a hat from Oil and Natural Gas to Solar,

Wind and Hydroelectric is unrealistic. This type of change would create a monopoly bigger than Amazon and could feasibly take decades to make a true transition. Most planes, trains, automobiles, and cargo ships in the USA run on fossil fuel. Some are converting to clean burning affordable Natural gas. The honest truth is the transition of a carbon footprint vehicle fleet to an electric no-emissions automobile fleet would hurt most owners' feelings. With that said, this is no time panic, stay the course and keep up the good work!

Wishing you a prosperous, safe & healthy 2022!

Fraternally,

**Ernesto "JR" Ybarra**

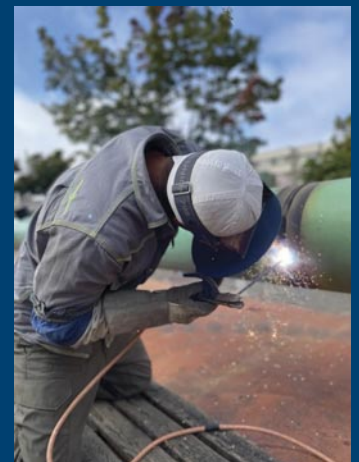
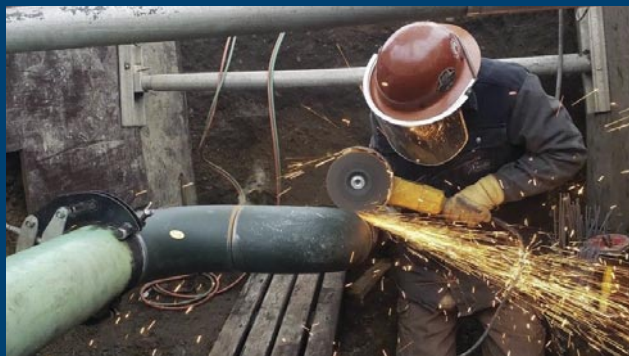
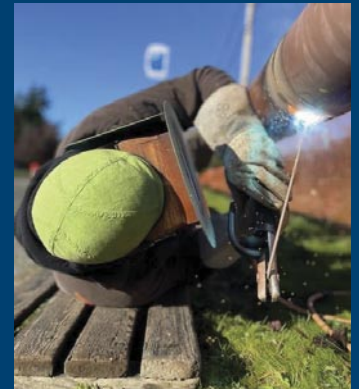
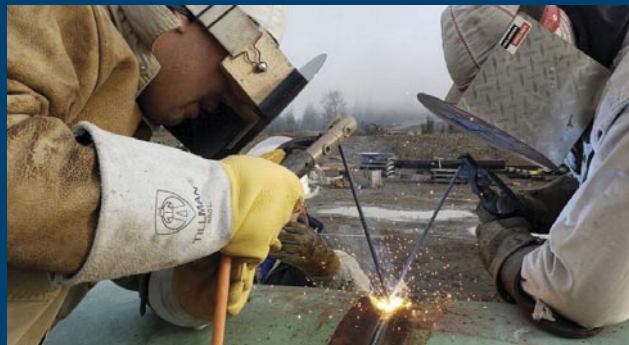
Pipeline Agent, Local 32



Alaskan Way Project Flaring

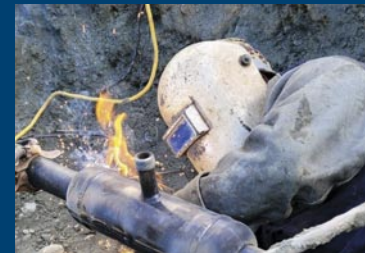
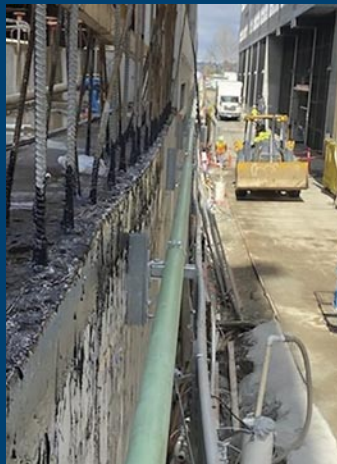


## JUST GETTIN' IT DONE!





# GAS DISTRIBUTION



# MAINLINE





# PSE AND MUNICIPALITIES REPORT

By Kurt Swanson



Happy New Year Local 32 Members! I don't know about you, but I am sure ready to put 2021 behind us! It has been a unique and tumultuous year for the members in the bargaining units that I represent.

Our members working in Water Operations at SPU have handled the changing working conditions very well. They have been placed on

staggered shifts, taken off staggered shifts, put back on and taken off again in the last several months while SPU has struggled with how to best manage the work during the covid pandemic. SPU has also lost some coworkers due to the COVID vaccination mandate, leaving fewer trained workers to complete the important work performed by our members.

The unions engaged in significant impact bargaining with the city to lessen the impacts of the COVID vaccination mandate on members. The resulting agreement includes an additional 80 hours of COVID leave for vaccinated workers, an additional vacation day, restoration of some sick leave days that were used due to COVID, and some additional time after the October 18th deadline to return to work if a worker decides to get vaccinated. PSE has also been struggling with the Biden mandate requiring them to mandate COVID vaccination. U.A. Local 32 and the IBEW have been jointly bargaining the impacts of the federal contractor vaccination mandate with PSE. The recent Georgia court decision to block the implementation of the Biden administration's federal contractor mandate has triggered PSE to pull back the mandate requirement (for now).

The agreement with PSE expired on September 30th, 2021. The union and PSE began bargaining for a new agreement on July 29th. A vote on a tentative agreement (TA) was conducted on October 25th, 2021, and the members voted to reject the TA. A new TA has been reached and was voted on December 20th. The members voted to accept the agreement. The new four-year agreement includes 9%, 3.5%, 3%, and 3% in wage increases, language for bereavement leave and lead pay (10%), weekly emergency response pay (\$525), and numerous other improvements. Please join me in thanking the PSE U.A.

members that have participated on the negotiation team; Troy Shopin, Terry Linville, Mitch Balzer, and Robert Bartholomew. Thank you all for your hard work on behalf of the members!

In the last few months, we were able to reach a tentative agreement with Seattle University for a one-year extension of the agreement. The members voted unanimously to accept the one-year 4.9% wage increase. Seattle University (SU) recognized that a market adjustment was needed for the mechanical shop. I want to commend SU for recognizing the inequity and working with the union to make the adjustment for the Local 32 members. Special thanks to our members that participated in the negotiation on behalf of the crew; Doug Carrol, Pat Baldwin-McCurdy, and Mike Mullen. Thank you for your efforts on the negotiation!

We will be bargaining in 2022 for a new agreement for our LNI members. The process should start with the state after the first of the year. I will put out information and messaging to the members after the first of the year. In the meantime, we will continue to pursue positive changes for the members in our quarterly labor management meetings. I want to thank our stewards who work very hard in these meetings on behalf of their peers: Jason Summers, Joe Sumrall, Tim Cleary, and Allen Johnson. Thank you all for your efforts!

Water District 49 (WD49) has undergone a change in leadership over the last year and the Local 32 members have weathered it all in stride. The agreement for WD49 is set to expire at the end of May 2022. I am looking forward to work with the members and the shop steward, Brian Gilmore, after the first of the year as we begin bargaining for a new agreement. The Highline Water District (HWD) members are at the mid-point of their agreement, and things have been running smoothly in 2021. Both WD49 and HWD have required 100% vaccination, and Lake Washington School District (LWSD) and Shoreline School District (SSD) have also required vaccination. The LWSD agreement will expire in August of 2022 and negotiation will commence soon.

The change over the last year has kept me and the Stewards on our toes. The Stewards have done a great job navigating the last year. Please take a moment to thank your Steward!

Fraternally,

**Kurt Swanson**



## PAC REPORT

By Leanne Guier

Happy New Year!

Your Political Action Committee continued to meet virtually throughout 2021 to interview and educate candidates on our Local Union's pivotal issues. The number one issue discussed in every candidate interview was natural gas, and the role it plays in a balanced clean energy future. It was important to have a more in-depth conversation, which explains the ramifications of legislation and policy that would ban natural gas. Not only does it affect our jobs, but there is a substantial impact on the end users. We must ask each candidate: Does the current infrastructure support electrification? If not, who pays for the expansion? Who will be affected the most by implementing such policy?

We all know that natural gas is clean, efficient, and affordable. Creating a singular energy source for cooking and heating would make us dependent on electricity. Potentially, we would have no control of the rising cost of electrical

infrastructure expansion. Allowing for natural gas to continue as a part of a clean energy future, will encourage innovation for renewable energy sources such as hydrogen and gasification of solid waste to create synthetic fuels. Technology continues to advance and the leadership of our Local Union 32 are prepared to train for the future.

This last election cycle brought new faces to local governments. In King County, there are over 150 new elected officials serving in Municipalities and School Boards. King County Council has a new Councilmember, Sarah Perry. Seattle has a new Mayor, Bruce Harrell. He is a former Seattle City Council Member, who has a great relationship with Local 32. We look forward to continuing to work with him in his new role. Sara Nelson is a new Seattle City Councilmember. She understands our challenges with natural gas policies and has already reached out several times asking questions on policy being introduced. Port of Seattle has two new Commissioners, though we lost a couple friends in that race; we will continue to develop relationships with the new Port Commissioners.

The upcoming Legislative Session has been keeping the lobbying team very busy. There are four bills being introduced this legislative session, beginning January 10th, that are anti-natural gas. I have been working with Neil Hartman, Gordon Baxter, and Tim Herbert as we met several times with the Governor's office staff as these bills were being developed. These bills are a pulled apart version of HB 1084 that we were able to defeat last year. The coalition that was formed last year has been meeting and discussing strategy for this upcoming session. Despite our continuous push back on these bills while meeting with the Governor's office, they are being introduced in this session.

These bills include:

- Building Performance Standards Bill is directed at reducing greenhouse emissions in buildings.
- Building Codes Bill is to strengthen building codes in natural gas installation in new buildings.
- Targeted Electrification Bill is concerning the authority of publicly owned electric utilities to engage in targeted electrification through the adoption of plans that establish a finding that utility outreach and investment in the conversion of its customers' end use equipment from fossil fuels to electricity will provide net benefit to the utility.
- Clean Heat Plan is modifying the regulation of gas companies to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.



Mayor Dana Ralph of Kent and Training Coordinator, PJ Moss and King County Councilmember Pete von Reichbauer as they toured the JATC summer of 2021.

Continued on next page



This current session will be short. We have been diligent to have the necessary conversations with the Legislators that we have supported in the past. Our concerns are known, and we hope the door of communication will remain open as we work through legislation and policy decisions. There are 17 Legislative Districts in King County. This means there are 34 House seats and 7 Senate seats that will be on this year's ballot. Your Political Action Committee will continue their due diligence in educating and interviewing these candidates. This

is our work, our livelihood at stake and we are paying very close attention. Actions have consequences. If you would like more information on a topic mentioned or would like to participate in the Political Action Committee, please contact me at [leanne@ualocal32.com](mailto:leanne@ualocal32.com).

Fraternally,

**Sister Leanne Guier**  
Political Action Chair



Sara Nelson Lit drop on October 23rd, volunteers pictured Left to right – Leanne Guier, Jeremy Sandor and his son, Sara Rowan, John Komorowski, Seattle City Councilmember Sara Nelson, Eric Hladlilek, Gary Gregory, Jacquie Christian, Zac Smith, Chris Hawes, Rebecca Gregory (Gary's wife), Gordon Baxter



Mayor Dana Ralph and Kent City Councilmember Toni Troutner Lit Drop on October 16th from left to right – Leanne Guier, Kong Lefeu, Kent Mayor Dana Ralph, Sara Rowan, Kent City Councilmember Toni Troutner, John Komorowski, Gary Gregory, Augie Montoya, Kurt Swanson, Gordon Baxter, Eric Hladlilek



# In Memoriam

**DEDICATED TO THOSE MEMBERS NO LONGER WITH US**

DATE	NAME	TRADE	YEARS
12-13-2021	Brother Mark Greiner	BT Journeyman Plumber	13
12-11-2021	Brother Christopher Stanton	BT Journeyman Plumber	23
12-04-2021	Brother Steve Gauthun	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	44
11-25-2021	Brother Gerald Bresee	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	52
11-22-2021	Brother Carl Blackburn	BT Journeyman Plumber	69
11-13-2021	Brother Richard (Dick) Powers	BT Journeyman Plumber	74
11-02-2021	Brother Carl David	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	55
10-15-2021	Brother Shawn Sharpe	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	13
10-13-2021	Brother Donald Best	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	53
10-12-2021	Brother Buddy Leufkens	BT Journeyman Plumber	58
09-29-2021	Brother Byron Bockness	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	40
09-19-2021	Brother Mark Adams	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	5
09-04-2021	Brother David Fairburn	BT Journeyman Refrigeration	39
08-25-2021	Brother Franklin Downs	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	40
08-03-2021	Brother Larry Matthews	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	37
07-11-2021	Brother Pat Higgins	BT Journeyman Refrigeration	6
07-04-2021	Brother Booker T. Washington	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	49
06-18-2021	Brother Ray Wester	BT Journeyman Plumber	65
06-09-2021	Brother Garry Wagner	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	52
05-02-2021	Brother LeRoy Birkholz	MT Marine Pipefitter Journeyman	65
04-17-2021	Brother Patrick Scott	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	22
04-14-2021	Brother James McAllaster	BT Journeyman Plumber	56
04-09-2021	Brother Ronald Burgess	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	65
04-09-2021	Brother Ronald Sternod	BT Journeyman Plumber	37
03-08-2021	Brother Travis Bingisser	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	24
03-06-2021	Brother Fred Jun	MT Marine Pipefitter Journeyman	42
03-05-2021	Brother John RYAN HARPER	BT Journeyman Plumber	23
02-27-2021	Brother Richard Dominguez	MT Marine Pipefitter Journeyman	51
02-21-2021	Brother Carlos Torres	BT Journeyman Plumber	4
01-25-2021	Brother Stuart Corkum	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	39
01-24-2021	Brother Raymond Franks	BT Journeyman Plumber	73
01-20-2021	Brother Ronald Olson	BT Journeyman Steamfitter	54



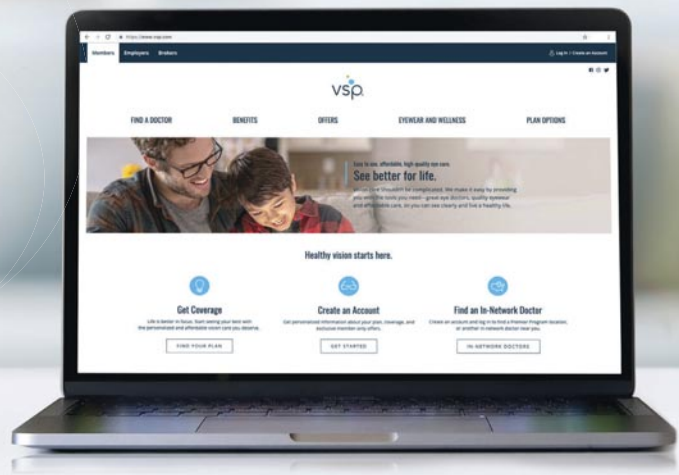
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