

# First Ever Veteran Group Graduates From VEEP Program



## Congratulations to Our Newest Apprentices

**B**efore a roomful of family and friends, IBEW 11 welcomed its first VEEP graduating class of former military members to the IBEW family. “Congratulations!” noted IBEW 11 Business Manager Joël Barton at the graduation ceremony at the ETI on

Dec. 2. “People leaving the military need good jobs, and we need them.” VEEP, or Veterans Electrical Entry Program, is a national alliance of the IBEW, the Electrical Training Alliance and NECA. The coalition works closely with the military to bring personnel ready to discharge from the various services into the IBEW, training them along the way. “You have protected our country.

you. You have shown through your commitment and your service to your country that you make great employees,” Barton said to the dozen new graduates who will now be folding into IBEW 11’s regular apprentice program. “You’re a great fit for this industry. It’s a career, not a job,” noted Jim Wilson, head of LA NECA. “Now is a great time to come into the industry – there are so many opportunities with the current energy revolution,” he added.

We owe it to you to provide good careers for

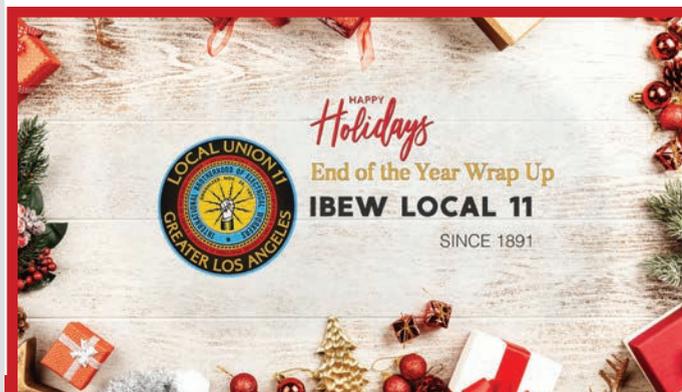
*(Continued on page 7)*

## LA Swears in a New Mayor

IBEW<sup>11</sup> was in the house as Karen Bass took the oath of office in an historic three-hour inauguration on Dec. 11 that featured superstar Stevie Wonder and was officiated by Vice President Kamala Harris.



During her 30+ year career in politics, Bass has always been a good friend to labor. At the ceremony, Bass vowed to unite all Angelenos as the city faces rising racial tensions and surging homelessness. “We look forward to working with the new Mayor,” said Local 11 Business Manager Joël Barton, pictured above with Karen Bass and Joël’s wife, Anna Barton.



Be Sure to Watch the Holiday Video ▶



Happy Holidays: Business Manager’s Message



The Warnock 5 Go to Georgia



District Holiday Party Pix



DECEMBER 2022

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THE NEWSLETTER OF IBEW LOCAL 11

NEWS @11



# BUSINESS MANAGER'S MESSAGE

By Joël Barton

## Happy Tidings for the Holiday Season

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters, Happy holidays to all our IBEW 11 family! As we look back at the year winding down, 2022 has been a very strong year for our union. Work was very healthy, with our members posting over 11 million man hours of work in our pension plan, we won big on the political front in the Nov. 8 mid-terms, and thanks to President Biden's infrastructure bill as well as Gov. Newsom's climate bill, we can look forward to hundreds of new projects coming online around the state and the country.

In addition to looking forward to a very robust work picture in 2023, our pension and medical plans are healthy. There is every reason to be optimistic this holiday season, as we all look forward to so many good work opportunities in the next few years.

### The 2023 Work Picture

I want to begin by thanking the IBEW and the Biden administration for passage of the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill last year, with many of those projects just coming online now. IBEW 11 members are huge beneficiaries of that infrastructure money, as tens of thousands of work hours are being created and will continue for many years to come.

In California, the Governor's climate bill, which we were instrumental in helping to pass, will create much work for our members. Now, we can all look forward to over \$1 billion in EV charging station work around the state. So be sure to get EVITP certified. An Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program certification will make you qualified for this work. The certification is offered through our very own ETI, so be sure to reach out.

I just returned from the State Building Trades Association meeting, where the new "Energy Czar" was announced — former LA mayor and labor's friend Antonio

Villaraigosa. So look forward to a close working relationship between your union and more electrical work.

### Political Clout

We spend much time talking about politics in our communications to you. Why? Because politics is so important to our daily lives — as workers, as community members, and as heads of our families.

I'm proud to say labor did very well in the recent mid-terms. We elected a very labor-friendly mayor — Karen Bass. I want to welcome to my long-time friend as she takes the reins of our city. I was honored to attend her inauguration and look forward to a close working relationship with her and the new City Council.

We elected dozens of new legislators around the state and passed measure ULA (the United to House LA measure), the mansion tax, that will provide annual funding to help build tens of thousands of low-income housing

to get our homeless population housed and off the streets.

Our union has clout. IBEW 11 is a known entity in Sacramento, as well as City Hall. The current speaker of the Assembly spoke at our recent General Membership meeting about the state of the state and all the incoming projects he looks forward to building with us.

On the horizon is billions of dollars in infrastructure work, solar, EV charging stations, and now, the ramping up of alternative energy sources in nuclear and hydrogen. And don't forget, the Olympics are coming in 2028, which means even more infrastructure and rebuilding work for us.

2023 is a very good time to be an electrician.

Here's to wishing you and yours a joyous holiday season and a happy new year. As always, be safe and stay healthy.

*In Solidarity,  
Joël Barton  
IBEW 11 Business Manager*

# IBEW 11's NEWS@11

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# 2022: Work Well Done



**B**rothers and Sisters,  
This year is coming to an end, and I am pleased to say that we can look back on work well done. Considering that the economy is trying to get back into full operation (while slowing inflation), our construction industry has done very well. We've increased our wages, maintained

our fringe benefits and worked more safely with less injury. This coming year has a lot more work in store for us. IBEW Local 11 has several "sizable" projects in the works: the "INTUIT" sports arena should be in full stride in 2023, and UCLA Harbor General Hospital (11 buildings) as well as all our local oil refineries are engaged in extensive electrical upgrades. And LAX airport has several existing

projects and many more additional projects to come. It's also important to seek continuing any additional education in our industry. Staying "a cut above the rest" in your expertise as an electrician is always encouraged. When new technologies like electric charging stations come onboard, we need to be ready! As always, if you have any questions please contact your local agents or

give our main office a call. I would like to wish you all a very happy holidays! Be safe out there!  
  
Sincerely,  
Gaylor "Rusty" Roten

## The Warnock



**I**n the anxious days leading up to the Dec. 6 Senate runoff between Raphael Warnock and Herschel Walker, five members of IBEW 11's Organizing Dept. flew to Georgia and braved the cold to do their part for history. The five staffers, dubbed the Warnock 5, included Lali Castillo, Ruben Mendoza, Tommy Zielomski, Chris Longoria and Beto Gonzalez. They knocked on over 250 doors, talking to voters about what was at stake in this tight runoff.

"We covered a lot of ground in a week," said Castillo. "Everyone we spoke to was so excited about the election. They were all appreciative we had come all the way from California to help ensure that Warnock won the runoff." Georgia is very different from Los Angeles, Castillo noted with a laugh. "I've done canvassing here in LA, and it was nothing like that. Georgia is a right-to-work state. It's also an open carry state - meaning you can carry guns

in public. We're just not used to seeing guns in public like that." The group decided to stay an extra day to watch the election results with the hundreds of other union members who had come from all over the country to help out with GOTV. "When Warnock finally won, we were all so pumped up. It was such a roller coaster ride to watch the count. But when the final numbers came in, it made it all worthwhile." "Local 11 always shows up," Castillo said proudly.



Yuletide Celebrations around the Districts

# Happy Holidays All!

D2



D3



Yuletide Celebrations around the Districts

# Happy Holidays All!

## D4



## D5



# Apprenticeship Coordinator Alton Wilkerson Answers Our Questions

By Evan Henerson

**L**ocal 11's Apprenticeship Program draws admiration from far and wide. As one of the largest trade apprenticeship programs in the nation (with more than 1,700 students), Local 11's program has laid the foundation for hundreds of future journeymen to begin their union careers. With 2022 coming to a close, News @ 11 spoke with Apprenticeship Coordinator Alton Wilkerson to get his thoughts on the state of the program.

**News @ 11:** What are some reasons for Local 11 apprentices to be optimistic for the coming year?

**AW:** The trustees for the apprenticeship program have met with some of the apprentices recently. We want to hear their concerns and hear about some of the problems they think we can fix. One of the big things was the leave of absence process and the turnaround time with that. The trustees have made some changes and I think that will help out a lot. It will help answer a lot of questions like "Can I still go on my trip?" or "I was sick. Was my doctor's note sufficient?" We heard from the apprentices that that was a big issue and we've been able to change that process.

**News @ 11:** Can you talk about the relationship between the trustees and the newly-formed Apprenticeship Council?

**AW:** The council is still kind of in its infancy, but they're having meetings. It's led by Christopher Rodriguez, and it is their council. We don't want to oversee it or tell them how things should be. The council should be used as a funnel to the trustees to express their concerns or to express "Hey, this is going right. We like this." Or "Maybe you guys should look into this for the program." The council is also a safe room for apprentices to be heard and not feel any judgment or to feel intimidated because there's an instructor or staff member there. It's their safe place.

**News @ 11:** Is the fact that the program is the nation's largest a major point of pride for the union?

**AW:** Absolutely. To have the



largest electrical apprenticeship program in the country in our backyard is definitely something to be proud of and it's something I feel that when people hear about us, regardless of what capacity we are in, it's always "Hey, Local 11 is doing these great things. They are learning things ahead of the curve." I want our apprentices to take pride in being #1 in the country when it comes to the size of the facility. There have been times when the Electrical Training Alliance (ETA), the organization that oversees our curriculum, will come to us and say, "I know you guys have implemented this. How can we put it into the national arena?"

**News @ 11:** It must also be gratifying to have such high-profile guests come to tour the ETI. When they visit, what sorts of questions do they have?

**AW:** Hearing that we're one of the largest programs in the country in itself is an eye-opener. They also hear that we're a net zero facility meaning we're producing more power than we're consuming. They want to see how that works. And they want to see the large footprint that we have for our training facility. We have over 140,000 square feet. We have more

apprentices than some other locals have total members. It's enticing for them to come see how we are able to manage an apprenticeship program of this size. We hear from a lot of politicians, from leadership within our union, from everybody.

**News @ 11:** March of 2023 will mark two years since you became the program's coordinator. What sorts of changes have you seen in the program during that time?

**AW:** I've tried to build the relationship with the apprentices to make sure they're more comfortable reaching out to me and knowing that they will be heard. I want them to know they can be comfortable reaching out to me, even on the weekends. They might not want to call, but maybe they'll send me a text message. I've been very proud of them for reaching out when they are battling certain issues like mental health issues because that's a very important topic for me. I would hate for something to happen to one of my apprentices because they didn't feel like they could reach out to me. I like the fact that they are comfortable enough to reach out to me and I'm able to have an open conversation with them to try to get them to

understand how important it is for them to get the help they need to deal with whatever situation they're dealing with.

**News @ 11:** So do you get calls at all hours and on weekends?

**AW:** Absolutely. I've had calls at 10 p.m., at Sunday dinner on Saturdays during my son's football games. My family understands how important this program is to me because I know what it has done for us as a family, and I want to make sure other people experience that same gratitude for what this program can do for you if you complete it.

**News @ 11:** Any final thoughts?

**AW:** I want to emphasize that I take pride in being a part of this union, that I understand professionalism and how we are at a higher standard because we're one of the largest locals in the country. I also want people to think about giving back to the program that has given so much to us. I would hope that once the apprentices finish the program, they would think about becoming an instructor or would want to one day take my place as the coordinator or just want to give back to the organization that has changed so many lives.

# Listen Up!

By Mike Costigan

**W**e spend so much time and attention protecting our eyes, that sometimes our hearing gets overlooked. Ask anyone who has experienced prolonged exposure to loud noises who chose not to wear any hearing protection, and they'll tell you some of the issues they now live with.

In 1998, NIOSH recommended to OSHA to extend noise regulations to the construction industry. The permissible exposure limit [PEL]

is 85dB, however, in most cases, the noise on a construction site is much higher. Being exposed to loud noise for a prolonged period can overwork the hair cells, Cilia, in the ear causing the cells to become damaged or die.

Think of the hair cells in your ears as wet grass that bends over when exposed to loud noises. If the noise is short term, the cells will begin to recover and stand up again. But if the noise is a constant or a day-to-day occurrence, the cells never get an opportunity to heal. In fact, by the time you notice any hearing loss, many hair cells have been destroyed and cannot be repaired.

Tinnitus is also a result of loud noises. Tinnitus can be acute or chronic. Usually for a short period of excessive exposure to noise like a concert or motorcycle riding, you may experience an acute reaction which will typically subside in a day or two.

But a lifestyle of continuous day to day exposure could result in a chronic condition and result in permanent hearing loss. 25% of people ages 20 to 69 have some sort of induced hearing loss. There is treatment for Tinnitus if the cells have not been permanently damaged.

I always recommend that members consult an audiologist for



the best course of action.

Of course, prevention is the best way to protect your hearing. Implementation of the hierarchy of controls has PPE as the last resort. PPE will come primarily in the form of ear plugs or earmuffs but removing yourself from the source is always the best practice.

In short, don't take your hearing for granted. It deserves to be protected, as do all your senses.

## DAY OF SERVICE

Continued from page 1

The VEEP program begins while the team is still in the military, training them for the six weeks while they're on base, then three more weeks at the ETI.

State Senator Bob Archuleta, chair of the California Senate Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, and a proud veteran himself, keynoted the graduation ceremony. "We love our veterans. You show up on time, understand the regulations, and are sharp to recognize a good opportunity to change your lives." Certain industries like energy and hydrogen are growing by leaps and bounds, he said. "We need you in those industries right now."

Archuleta thanked IBEW 11 for its leadership and vision in taking the program to the next level.

"It's a family you're joining. We'll keep you on the path of growth and excellence."

Noting that this is the first graduating class of its kind, Archuleta said he is working with the group to expand the program and "help develop talented young men and women for the future."

Congratulations to the following graduates: Sean Bishop, Marines; Frank Cisneros, Marines; Consuelo Guerrero, Air Force; Jose Mancilla, Marines; William Moreno-Gonzalez, Marines; Corwin Nau, Navy; Khemet Osborne, Army; Robert Puanglarplai, Army; Gabriel Riutcel, Army; Newton Shunk, Marines; Nathan Wood, Army; and Travis Young, Army.

