



# Celebrating Women's History Month

Recognizing Trailblazers in Local 11, the IBEW, the Building Trades and Beyond

**M**arch is Women's History Month. Local 11, the IBEW and the Building Trades have all made strides towards inclusion, though certainly there's more work to be done. "Women workers continue to make IBEW history today, not just on the job but in communities throughout North America," said former IBEW International President Lonnie Stephenson in 2021. Citing the wage gap between men and women, Stephenson heralded organized labor's effort. "The proof is undeniable that collective bargaining and unions

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In a show of solidarity for Women's History Month, Local 11 sent some of its finest electricians to the State Capitol, where Assemblymember Liz Ortega honored the group of Union sisters and presented Assembly Concurrent Resolution 141 in recognition of California's tradeswomen and their contribution to the construction industry.

## IBEW 11 Members Helped Make the Winning Difference in March 5 Primary

By Antonio Sanchez  
IBEW 11 Political Director

**IBEW** 11 members were fired up and ready to go for the recent March 5 Primary. As a result, over 95 percent of our endorsed candidates either won outright or are going into a runoff. Yes, the IBEW Local 11 bump helped many labor candidates win their election.

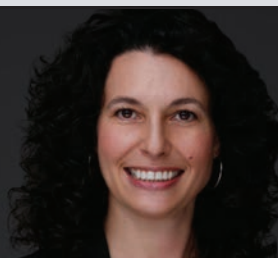
Analyzing who actually cast their ballots in the primary race, the electorate in Los Angeles that

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PHOTO BY RICK GUSTAFSON



Business Manager Robert Corona, staff and members welcomed Governor Gavin Newsom and supporters to the San Fernando District 4 Union Hall. The governor spoke about Proposition 1: Treatment Not Tents, which received approval from the voters.



Charging Toward a Green Energy Future



Local 11's First Ever Women's Luncheon



Member Profile: Hoang Nguyen





# BUSINESS MANAGER'S MESSAGE

By Robert Corona

## Working Toward an Improved Work Picture

**A**s I sit down to write this month's article, I have just finished checking the out-of-work book and am disheartened to recognize so many names amongst the over 900 members who are listed. Many who I have worked with, some who I have brought into membership and even family members are on this list. I know that these members are relying on me to better their situation, and while our present situation is worrying, I do see hope on the horizon.

I have spoken with various contractors, and they have all expressed to me the work that they have on the books but are just waiting to be let. Some reasons for the delay are customers are anticipating an interest rate change and are waiting for that to drop, some are still affected by the supply-demand issue and cannot get the material needed to perform the work, and other reasons for the delay.

While the work picture is slow

now, the amount of work to come will be plentiful. Just to mention a few:

Burbank airport broke ground on a \$1.2 billion project which will include a new terminal that will replace the old one and will bring stores, lounges and gardens.

The \$1.7 billion Harbor UCLA Medical Center revamp also recently broke ground and will include two brand new medical buildings which will consolidate services on the 72-acre facility. This joint venture between Morrow Meadows and Rosendin has about 20 members on site, and they anticipate many more.

The \$2 billion 4th & Central mixed-use Downtown project has cleared major hurdles in the approval process and will add a 42-story skyscraper and mid-sized buildings, which will incorporate "workforce housing" which will allow more Trades members to live in the structures they build.

The \$1.2 billion ARCHES hydrogen hub is only a portion of the \$12 billion that will come from a public-private partnership that will build infrastructure that can transport, store and dispense hydrogen throughout California. These hydrogen hub test sites will be built in the Ports of LA and Long Beach.

Let's not forget the work that will

be coming prior to the Olympics and World Cup.

These projects are on the horizon and will put our members to work, but what can be done now?

I have met with our NECA partners, and we will look into the feasibility of increasing the SUB plan payments. We should know by the end of the month if it is possible without jeopardizing the fund. To ease the burden of falling off the books for striking out on a call, I have suspended the strike system and wiped the slate clean of all strikes any member may have accumulated.

When we start to have calls going unfilled and the strike system is reimplemented, then our members will start from zero. You will also start to see the exact address of the job site that is listed in the call, so you know if you want to come into the hall for dispatch or not. We will add a hyperlink to the zip code so you can see if your zip code is one of them included in the call.

For those interested in becoming a SALT, we will be putting on a SALTing class in the near future, so please contact our Organizing department or any staff member so we can put you on the list. All these suggestions were given to me by members I have visited on job sites to introduce myself as your

Business Manager.

I want you to know that I take every suggestion or idea into account and will try and implement them if possible. I have always done my best to better the lives of our membership and this IBEW Local. I know what it is like to be on the books for months at a time waiting for a call and trying to provide for my family and I will always do my best to ease as much of that burden on our members as I can.

On a lighter note, I want to thank all the women who attended the very first IBEW Local 11 Women's Luncheon we held a couple of Saturdays ago at our Electrical Training Institute. We had an excellent line-up of speakers which included the very first woman in our Local, the leader of EAA and a couple of women who run signatory electrical businesses in our jurisdiction.

I was thrilled to witness the energy in the room as these women shared their stories and advice on how to become successful tradeswomen in our industry. We had close to 100 participants in total and I am excited to see how next year's event will grow.

*In Solidarity,  
Robert Corona  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary*

## IBEW 11's NEWS@11

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

# Ongoing Specialty Training Helps When Times are Slow

**B**rothers and Sisters, I was talking to a member of Local 11 a few weeks ago who was asking when work was going to “pick up” and of course, what to “look out for.” Our conversation shifted to specialty calls.

I told him that there would soon be a need for instrumentation-certified electricians. I explained that even though he had a basic introduction to instrumentation during his apprenticeship, his level of

knowledge on the subject was equal to all the rest of the journeymen wiremen. In order to be competitive, he needed to take ongoing training to make himself a cut above the rest.

I recommended that he take journeyman wireman instrumentation classes at the E.T.I. As such, I express to you all that it is to your advantage that you constantly seek to improve your skills and knowledge of your craft.

The local is doing everything possible to organize more work and make sure construction jobs are hiring “Union.” But it’s your

responsibility to stay on “top of your game” and have all these special skills at your ready. Go into the job with a positive work ethic. You will be employed longer and more consistently, and you and your family will be happier for it!

As always, if you have any questions please reach out to our Agents, Organizers and Officers. Thank you for the privilege to serve you. I remain yours in Solidarity.

Respectfully,  
Gaylord “Rusty” Roten  
President IBEW Local 11



## MARCH 5 PRIMARY

*Continued from page 1*

turned out was more conservative, skewing older and whiter, and smaller than expected. As a result, we had a few unexpected outcomes.

First, we're delighted that Prop 1 was approved. Yes, it was a slim margin, but nevertheless, it was a win that will help many of our homeless population. We're letting everyone know that Prop 1 owes its victory to the Local 11 bump picked up during GOTV weekend when Gov. Gavin Newsom stopped by to our D4 hall to campaign for the proposition. Prop. 1 will change, for the better, how we deliver mental health solutions and treat the unhoused. Additionally, it will include the construction of new facilities, built by labor.

We participated in several independent expenditures organized by the LA/OC Building

Trades Council. First, I'll start with the incredible victory of our very own Alhambra Council member Sasha Renee Perez. Sasha's campaign for State Senate District 25 started strong, but began to look more and more challenging when a millionaire jumped into the race late in the game and spent millions against her. The millionaire was literally trying to buy the seat.

With our help, Sasha finished first in the primary and will now face a republican in the general election. If you live in Pasadena, Glendale, Alhambra, Monterey Park, Sierra Madre, and a few other neighborhoods near the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, the daughter of an IBEW Local 11 member could well be your next state senator! We're so proud of Sasha and her campaign.

I also want to note LA County Board of Supervisor Kathryn Barger's campaign. A republican,



Kathryn is one of our strongest allies on the board. She represents the North parts of LA County, going from Pyramid Lake, to the Antelope Valley, and from the Foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, all the way to the San Bernardino County border. Supervisor Barger won with almost 60 percent of the vote.

Lastly, we're not losing any time in starting a voter registration

drive for the all-important November election. We are reminding everyone to register their family members, update their registration status, or register for the first time. If you don't register to vote, you don't have a voice at the polls.

It's critical that IBEW 11 members make our voices heard! Register. And Vote!



Business Manager Robert Corona caught up with IBEW Local 11 (ITS - Intelligent Transportation Systems) members on-site during a traffic signal shutdown in Downey. This operation really drives home why having a skilled and trained IBEW workforce is so important. When you consider things like overhead clearance hazards, pinch and crush points, and the constant flow of traffic, including both vehicles and pedestrians, you realize just how vital expertise is in these situations.



# IBEW Charging Forward in Its Mission to Lead a Green Energy Future

## A Conversation with IBEW IR Micah Mitrosky on Preserving the Planet and Creating New Union Jobs



By Jeremy Kehoe

A stubborn myth persists that environmental responsibility and job creation are somehow a zero-sum game – that you cannot achieve one while fostering the other – despite a wealth of data that convincingly proves the opposite.

Micah Mitrosky is an International Representative for IBEW's 9th District where she covers renewable energy, storage and clean transportation in California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii and Nevada. Prior to this role, Mitrosky served as Environmental Organizer for IBEW Local Union 569. Before joining the IBEW she planted her environmental-economic roots as an organizer at the Sierra Club.

Mitrosky also currently serves on behalf of the CA State Association of Electrical Workers (CSAEW) as a representative at the BlueGreen Alliance California statewide table. BlueGreen Alliance CA is an organization

dedicated to uniting labor unions and environmental organizations to solve today's environmental challenges in ways that create and maintain quality jobs and build a clean, thriving and equitable economy.

Mitrosky shared her vision for how labor and environmental organizations can continue to work together in their shared mission to preserve the planet while creating good-paying union jobs.

**What are your primary responsibilities as International Representative at IBEW's Ninth District?**

I help support local unions throughout the 9th District in their work to make sure that the renewable energy and clean transportation sectors are creating IBEW work opportunities. That includes sharing information and best practices across the District as well as tracking industry and policy trends, meeting with decision makers and attending conferences and industry events to maximize IBEW visibility.

**What major issues and trends are you focused on right now?**

Recently, I've been tracking renewable energy and battery manufacturing and clean transportation funding coming from federal legislation and

sharing that information with local unions so that we can capitalize on the many work opportunities being created by the Biden administration. This year we have one of the most important Presidential elections of our lifetime. IBEW is working across the country to help re-elect President Biden who is creating union jobs, investing in workers, and holding corporations accountable. We know when IBEW members turn out, we can make a big difference in getting union-friendly candidates over the finish line up and down the ballot.

**How important a priority are clean-energy jobs to IBEW and its members?**

We know the next 100 years of energy are going to be very different than the last 100 years. Our local unions are on the forefront of this changing energy landscape, and from the 9th District's viewpoint we want to stay ahead of these changes and help shape this clean energy future to create IBEW work opportunities while we address climate change. This is a top priority for IBEW. Across the country IBEW has hired renewable energy government affairs coordinators, so there's now a dedicated representative within each district pursuing clean

energy work and making sure that work is creating IBEW jobs.

**What areas is IBEW focused on right now to help its members capitalize on the renewable-energy future here in the 9th District?**

The Biden administration championed and helped successfully pass the Inflation Reduction Act, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the CHIPS and Science Act with labor standards that the IBEW advocated for. This has created an unprecedented moment in recent history for work opportunities for the IBEW. This is true for construction, and we're also seeing the largest re-growth in manufacturing in a generation, and a lot of this is in the clean tech and advanced manufacturing sectors. We're focused on making sure IBEW is capitalizing as much as we possibly can on all these federal investments and not only making sure IBEW members are going to work but that we're also organizing across these sectors to make sure they're creating good union jobs and lifting up working families. The great labor standards that are embedded in these investment programs are making it much easier to do that now than in the past.

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IBEW Local 11 members, Joe Herrera, John Harriel Jr. and Kelly Oliver received their 25-year pins at the District 6 Holiday meeting. Business Manager Robert Corona was honored to be able to present pins to these three former students whom he taught during their first year of apprenticeship.



Congratulations to our flag football team for a repeat and bringing home the trophy at IBEW's flag football tournament!



do more to close the wage gap than almost any other factor.”

At the end of last year, nearly 4,000 women participated in the 13th annual Tradeswomen Build Nations conference. Among the attendees were 400 IBEW members.

“These events are important because it gives all sisters in the trades a sense of belonging and a reminder that they are supported,” said

Jennifer Gray, director of the IBEW Civic and Community Engagement Department, in a story on the IBEW website. “There is tremendous value in our sisters and siblings telling their story, and hearing others’ stories, that a job in the trades can truly change the trajectory of someone’s life.”

The North America’s Building Trades Unions recently celebrated “Women in Construction

Week” highlighting women in the trades; and the AFL-CIO is also getting in on the celebration with a series of profiles.

And by the way: Liz Shuler (President of the AFL-CIO), Lorena Gonzalez (California Labor Federation Executive Secretary –Treasurer) and Ivonne Wheeler (Los Angeles County Federation of Labor President) show just how far women have come in labor.

# Women’s Luncheon Promotes Connection Among Contractors and Workers Alike

**By Grant Slater**

In celebration of Women’s History Month, IBEW 11 hosted its inaugural Women’s Luncheon on Mar. 9 at the ETI. With female members joined by women contractors and leaders, the event underscored the union’s commitment to inclusivity and support for its female members in the electrical industry.

Diana Limon, the Local’s Director of Women Recruitment, noted that more than 70 female members from every classification attended the first-ever luncheon of its kind.

The gathering celebrated the contributions of women to the electrical trade with speakers including Kelly Cooper, the first woman to join Local 11 in 1976, and Jane Templin, who came onboard a year later.

Marleen Fonseca, Executive Director of the Engineers and Architects Association, a part of Local 11, addressed the attendees, highlighting the broader industry support for women in construction and engineering roles.

The event showcased leadership roles women are assuming within the sector, featuring female-owned contractors.

Katie Scarlett Reyes, the third-generation owner of Tony de Maria Electric, and Julia Hilde, vice president of Industrial High Voltage, shared their leadership journeys, indicating a shift towards female leadership in traditionally male-dominated fields.

Interactive segments like the “lightning circuit breaker” encouraged participants to connect, with strategic seating arrangements fostering diverse interactions.

This initiative aimed to strengthen the network among female electricians, apprentices, and journeymen, promoting knowledge

exchange and support.

“The women of Local 11 continue to prove their activism,” Limon said, emphasizing the critical roles of volunteerism, recruitment, and retention in supporting women in the trade.

Further highlighting the importance of such gatherings, Reyes of Tony de Maria Electric, shared her insights and experiences as a third-generation leader of a family-owned business.

Working as an electrician where encounters with other women were rare, she has witnessed the positive changes that have made the field more inclusive.

“When I started working as a technician and electrician in the field, there would be months at a time before I saw another woman,” Reyes shared.

Reyes also spoke about the luncheon as an opportunity for female leaders to connect and support each other.

“Through this event, I got to meet another female-owned company and we’re getting our teams together for potential collaboration,” she said.

Reyes’ experience and the connections formed at the luncheon illustrate the power of such gatherings in building a supportive community for women in the electrical trade.

“I was very grateful to be asked to be there. It was an uplifting day, and I can’t wait to go to the next one,” Reyes said.

As IBEW Local 11 looks ahead, events like this luncheon play a vital role in promoting gender diversity and empowerment within the industry.

Celebrating achievements and addressing challenges head-on, IBEW Local 11 is paving the way for the inclusion and advancement of women in electrical work, inspiring a new generation to join their ranks.



PHOTOS BY RICK GUSTAFSON





## DISTRICT 1 – NORTH

### Brett Moss

Brothers and Sisters, greetings from District One North. I hope this report finds you and your families well.

Work in the area is still moving slowly. There have been a few new LAUSD projects starting up and we saw one wrap up. Residential Prop HHH has provided work for D1 North along with some private projects. The project at Sunset and Western continues moving at a rapid pace but was slightly slowed due to the rains. There are a few projects along Sunset that should be starting soon.

A reminder, D1 unit meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month at 5 p.m. in Commerce, please attend when you can. The D1 welfare committee meets the last Tuesday of each month in Commerce, if you need assistance, please contact Shomari or myself.

With the rain continuing, be careful on the muddy and slippery surfaces.

Stay safe and be well. Always feel free to reach out via email, phone or text.

## DISTRICT 1 – SOUTH

### Shomari Davis

Some District 1 South projects coming in the future:

- The Los Angeles Convention Center will be a public private partnership between AEG and L.A. City. It will be a \$1.2 Billion dollar project that will connect the north and south halls with the closing of Pico Blvd.
- The L.A. Times building will become a Two Tower and new parking garage project. The Times building is historic and the brown connecting building will be torn down and the Towers will replace it. ONNI will be the developer and it will

be a CREEDLA project agreement.

- AMBROSIA Apartments in South L.A. is just starting and has been awarded to WALTON Electric.

## DISTRICT 3

### Mike Costigan

Hello sisters and brothers from District 3. Work has been sluggish in our local, but the contractors I've spoken to on the West Side say more work is coming down the pipeline soon.

Taft will be starting a couple of new school projects in the Santa Monica/Malibu School District and have been aggressively bidding on work for LAUSD.

I visited the new Sasco project in Century City where they are constructing a new 37 story building and large multilevel parking structure. The general foreman, told me that this job will be manning up as this job progresses. When I visited, steel was going up, and rebar was going in.

Sasco will also be needing manpower for the LACMA project on Miracle Mile. The General Foreman for that told me, now that most of the concrete has been poured and form supports have been removed, they can start to get to areas that had restricted access.

## DISTRICT 5

### Mitch Klein

Work in the High Desert is improving through political meetings, city conferences and different groups I belong to.

Some of the upcoming work includes the new Lancaster Hydrogen Plant, the new Resiliency Emergency project at the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, the new Palmdale Bus and Passenger rail car hub along with

continuing work at Antelope Valley College, Kaiser facilities, Antelope Valley Transit Authority and the Palmdale School District.

Our meetings are on the second Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m. Please come join the camaraderie and keep up with the latest news in Antelope Valley and beyond.

Sign up for Journeyman classes to keep your State License current.

Special thanks to our Business Manager Robert Corona for all his help in securing upcoming solar and Battery Storage projects in the Antelope Valley.

A shout out to our officers and members for all their hard work, participation and help in keeping District 5 great!

## CIVIL SERVICE

### Luis Arida

The following are the current updates for contract negotiations.

### County:

At this time, with all of our other represented agencies under contract, we need to dramatically increase our union density across all trades at the County so that we can be in the best possible bargaining position come spring of 2025 when we begin negotiations. To this end, we will be significantly ramping up our efforts to organize the non-members by visiting as many shops as possible over the coming months. Please help our efforts by setting up a visit to your location as soon as possible.

For further information, please attend our monthly Unit 14 meeting on the fourth Thursday of every month at 5 pm.. Additionally, please feel free to contact me at (626) 712-4769. or email me directly at [arida@ibew11.org](mailto:arida@ibew11.org).

## INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

### Chris Longoria

Being part of the IBEW Local 11 Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Division, our contribution to Los Angeles County's transportation infrastructure is crucial. Our specialized work on transit electrical systems directly impacts the efficiency and safety of diverse components. From optimizing traffic signals on busy roads to implementing sophisticated communication networks in tunnels, bridges, airfields, and beyond, our role is integral. We ensure the seamless operation of this intricate web of transportation, from roadways to air travel.

As a member of the ITS Division, take pride in actively shaping and maintaining the cutting-edge technology that defines Los Angeles County's interconnected and advanced transportation infrastructure.

Should you wish to learn more or have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me directly at (626) 318-6333 or via email at [clongoria@ibew11.org](mailto:clongoria@ibew11.org).

## MICAH MITROSKY

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**You serve on the BlueGreen Alliance California statewide Table, whose mission is to create and maintain quality jobs while building a clean, thriving, and equitable economy. How important is this partnership for IBEW in California?**

The BlueGreen Alliance unites labor unions and environmental organizations to solve environmental challenges in a way that creates and maintains quality jobs and builds a clean, thriving, and fair economy. In California, we're working together with Table partners

to find common ground and jointly advocate for policies that address climate change, promote union jobs, and power sustainable economic development. I serve as a table rep in the Alliance on behalf of CSAEW and also co-chair the BlueGreen Alliance California Energy Committee to figure out how we can advance mutual priorities.

### **What are some of those priorities?**

The legislature is in session in California right now, and there are a lot of bills being worked on. BlueGreen Alliance CA is monitoring bills to see if there is legislation we can work on together along with environmental partners. One

example of these areas we're talking about right now is sustainable schools.

### **Are you optimistic about the future of renewable-energy sector job growth and its ability to generate high-quality jobs for IBEW members?**

I think the next five to 10 years are going to be incredible in terms of the amount of renewable energy and clean transportation work that's coming and the amount of organizing opportunities for the IBEW. The strong labor standards that the IBEW has worked so hard to build into federal economic and climate policy are like nothing I've seen in my lifetime before.

**DISTRICT 1**  
**Zac Solomon**

Greetings Brothers and Sisters. We have continued to hit jobsites talking to contractors and unrepresented workers about the benefits of joining Local 11. The Organizers attended the Ninth District Organizing Conference where we worked on new avenues to help sign more members and contractors.

I know in times like this it's difficult to see why we should continue to organize, but as upcoming infrastructure projects that are mandated as union jobs, we need to be ready to supply the properly trained workforce.

IBEW International President Cooper has given the IBEW a goal of reaching 1 million members to regain its market share. The IBEW reached this membership count in the early '70s but declined throughout the '80s. It's the IBEW's vision to build up this strong membership again. A stronger membership means more bargaining power, higher wages and better working conditions.

Union involvement is key! We all need to do our part. Whether it is talking to electricians you run into in your daily life or encouraging the future generation to join the apprenticeship program, we are all organizers, and we are all representatives of the IBEW.

**DISTRICT 3**  
**Carlos Rodarte**

Hello brothers and sisters from District 3, IBEW Local 11. District 3 continues to grow, as we boost our organizing effort. We have been focusing our efforts on nonunion commercial, residential and retail sectors. In the past month, the organizing team has

visited several job sites engaging with workers and contractors to discuss the benefits of union membership. These visits have led to a significant increase in interest among workers wanting to join the union.

The organizing team has also been active in many outreach efforts. We have been attending industry events and hosting informational sessions to raise awareness about union work and the advantage of union membership. These efforts have resulted in a noticeable increase in union interest. New membership applications indicate growth and the recognition of the value that IBEW Local 11 provides to workers in the electrical industry.

**DISTRICT 5**  
**Adalberto "Beto" Gonzales**

Greetings to all from the Antelope Valley. In February, I attended the 9th district organizing conference in Las Vegas. We learned that the total membership count in the IBEW is 712,840. The membership count for the 9th District is 156,571. Our district accounts for 51% of total membership growth. International President Kenneth Cooper has set a goal to grow the total membership to 1 million members.

I attended a luncheon for the AV EDGE (Antelope Valley Economic Development Growth Enterprise) where they spoke about the project CTTE (Center for transportation technology excellence). This project is a rail car and bus manufacturing research and development center located in the Antelope Valley. There will be a 7-mile rail car test loop, and this will create over 100,000 jobs.

I continue to do job walks and have been going to job/career fairs. I want to say thank you to the

members who have called me about jobs that they see on their travels, it is much appreciated.

**EAA**  
**Marleen Fonseca**

EAA has successfully achieved and ratified four new contracts for thousands of Los Angeles City employees.

As a result, EAA members will receive a salary increase of 18.23% over the next four years! Other gains in the contract include many new bonuses, additional salary adjustments for multiple classifications (on top of the 18.23%), and improvements to current benefits such as paid parental leave (doubled from 6 to 12 weeks) and payout of sick hours at 100% of the employees' salary rate (vs. the prior 50% rate). Approximately 2/3 of the EAA membership participated in the vote and overwhelmingly approved the contract!

**SOUND & COMMUNICATIONS**  
**Christine Austria-Lozoya**

Reminder to all, coming up soon we will be allocating \$1.60 towards those areas that we need to add or help alleviate some of our concerns. We need all participation to strengthen this unit.

There are job calls that are still not being filled due to certifications. The ETI has courses that can help with that issue. If you are in need to obtain your VDV, FLS and OSHA, I urge you all to sign up for those courses immediately. There is an urgency to fill these calls.

The ETI will be holding a fiber fusion course in April if there are enough members to participate. The last class was a success so I am hoping we can keep that momentum up.

Our Unit meetings are now on the second Monday of the month at 5 p.m. behind dispatch in the City of Commerce.

**VETERANS CORNER**

# Dispatch for Ninth District Organizing Conference

**By Mike Kufchak**  
*Director of Veteran Affairs*

Fellow Veterans of Local Union 11,

During the month of February, I participated in the 9th District Organizing Conference, which was filled with updated educational classes and a refresher course on an upcoming

change to our current COMET Training. But more importantly, 9th District International Vice President Dave Reaves provided an opportunity to the Veteran Representatives of our District to provide a workshop for all Veterans in attendance on the Veterans Electrical Training Program (VEEP), Veterans Internships Providing Employment Readiness

(VIPER) and to include instruction on how to form a Veterans Committee. All in all, it was a very successful conference with unlimited networking opportunities for all in attendance.

Please note that the Local 11 Veterans Committee has established a Facebook Page. Veterans, please take the time to register. Just search "IBEW Local 11 Veterans" on Facebook.

**APPRENTICESHIP CORNER**

**By Kelly Oliver**  
*Apprenticeship Coordinator*

Hello everyone, I would like to introduce myself as your new Apprentice Coordinator. I took over this position in January when Alton Wilkerson was named our Director of Organizing. It's been nearly 26 years since I became an apprentice. The

training I received in my five-year apprenticeship helped set the foundation for me to climb the ladder to the General Superintendent level. Now returning here to represent all of you is humbling to me and I am determined to pass on the mental tools needed for apprentices to succeed in the construction industry.

These two months have been a real eye opener to me on something Alton spoke of continuously: Mental Health. It's a real issue. I want to keep

reminding everyone that we do have the resources to help you and your family, and like he said, "It's ok to not be okay."

I'd also like to congratulate our new veteran apprentices who recently graduated from our VEEP program.

Everyone knows it's that time of year that everyone gets active in our politics. Don't forget about our allocation meeting coming up, be active and don't forget to vote.



# Member Spotlight: For Hoang Nguyen, there is No Time Like the Present

By Oren Peleg

“I wish I would have joined the union at 18,” Hoang Nguyen, a Journeyman with IBEW Local 11, says with a laugh. Now, at 41 and having recently turned out, Nguyen reflects on how joining the union changed his life.

“When I was a kid, I was a knucklehead,” Nguyen begins. After graduating high school, followed by a stint locked up, he began working odd jobs and eventually found himself as an iron worker. As he approached his mid-30s, he got a call from his uncle who “had just retired at 70” after a full career in IBEW.

“So, he and I had a conversation, and he asked me straight up: do you think your body’s gonna last in that trade until 70?” Nguyen says. “And then what kind of life are you going to have after that?”

It was a wake-up call for Nguyen. Not only was he not in the union, but he recalls looking around at older ironworkers and noticing how many of them had broken body parts and other physical difficulties. That’s when he decided his uncle was right and it was time to become an electrician and join IBEW. “My uncle told me I have plenty of time to build a pension if I decided to switch careers. The sooner the better. So, I did.” And he hasn’t looked back.

But union life hasn’t been



without its struggles, too. In his fourth year as an apprentice, Nguyen became a father. “It was crazy,” he recalls. “What would happen is, they have swing shift class, right? And because I didn’t

have enough time to go from work to home, shower, then to school in the mornings, when I left work, I would drive straight to school and sleep in the parking lot for the last two years of my apprenticeship.”

Was it worth it? “It’s been incredible,” Nguyen says without pause. “From third year, you’re making a living wage. No college debt. No credit card debt. Me and my wife are saving up for a house right now. It’s just incredible. I would have never thought that it was possible.”

What’s more, Nguyen boasts that training in Los Angeles makes him the best of the best: “Local 11 specifically is probably the best in the nation because we deal with everything. In New York, you can’t do solar. But in California, and Los Angeles specifically, you have your hands in everything—from working small projects, where it’s just lighting, to big projects, like a refinery” or working at a movie studio.

Over the last few years, Nguyen has been on the crew at Cedars-Sinai hospital working for Polaris Electrical. It’s the camaraderie of the work that he loves the most. “You work with a good set of guys, and anything can get done,” he notes. “Just the fact that you can bond together, and everybody carries their own weight and helps whoever needs help.”

It’s that same sense of camaraderie that Nguyen points to when looking to the future. “I love working out in the field and, as a new journeyman, being able to teach apprentices,” he concludes. “When you teach them how to do something right, and they get the hang of it and it just clicks in their head—you can see it in their eyes. It’s just great.”

## Lobbying in Sacramento



**TOP:** State Senator Bob Archuleta met with IBEW Local 11 organizers to discuss legislative protections for workers.

**ABOVE:** State Senator Maria Elena Durazo met with IBEW 11 Organizer Ben Frank and Errol Cutley and Business Agents Shomari Davis to discuss legislation.