

# BCTGM *News*

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## NEW OFFICERS



*Strain*  
for the Future

PAGES 8-9



# *the* PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## **Building LABOR'S Voice:**

### **The Importance of State Labor Federations & Central Labor Bodies**

When AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler asked me to be part of the Federation's Commission on Strengthening State Federations and Area and Central Labor Councils (see page 3 for full story), I was honored and determined to use my role to help build power for all of organized labor by increasing the BCTGM's participation in these labor bodies.

AFL-CIO State Federations and Central Labor Councils (CLC) bring Unions from many industries together to take action on local and statewide issues including legislative initiatives, bargaining support, and strike/lockout assistance.

Affiliation gives BCTGM Local leaders and members an opportunity to meet and interact with labor allies throughout your state and region. Wherever our members live and work, each BCTGM Local Union needs to be an active participant – a real member – of the AFL-CIO local labor councils and state federations.

Perhaps the most vivid example of how BCTGM members have benefited from the work of state federations and area labor councils is the invaluable assistance we received during our strikes in 2021 and 2022.

State federations and labor councils led multi-union mobilization and solidarity campaigns to support striking BCTGM members at Frito Lay, Kellogg's, Nabisco, Jon Donaire and Ingredion. From coordinating food and water donations, school supply pickups and sponsoring holiday festivities during the long strikes, to holding large rallies and urging community-wide solidarity, state federations and labor councils played a tremendous roll in each of our strikes.

Affiliating with the AFL-CIO state federations and central labor councils isn't just the right thing to do – it is essential in our fight to build worker power and to protect our jobs.

Each day, state federations around the country lobby for state laws and regulations that benefit working families. Whether it is fighting for workers compensation benefits, overtime protections, improved workplace health & safety, or to protect pensions, all workers benefit from these legislated improvements.

Most recently, the Michigan legislature repealed the Right-to-Work (for less) law, the first state in 58 years to do so. This dramatic action benefits all BCTGM Locals in Michigan.


While participation by Locals is voluntary, the BCTGM strongly encourages all Local Unions to help build stronger state labor movements through full affiliation and participation.

AFL-CIO CLCs comprise the grassroots network of the labor movement's effort to ensure that economic, education, health care and other policies benefit working families in communities where union members work and live.

The good and admirable work done by state federations and CLCs benefits EVERY BCTGM Local Union – whether the Local is a dues-paying affiliate or not. But remember, if you are getting all the benefits but not contributing, you are a “free loader” and are no different than those in right-to-work states who won't join the union but claim all the benefits.


Simply stated, our support for state federations and central labor bodies is essential to the survival of the labor movement. Together we can make a difference and provide a better future for labor in this country.

— Anthony Shelton, BCTGM International President



# BCTGM

## News



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# President Shelton Visits State Federations and Central Labor Bodies

Following the 2022 AFL-CIO Convention, the AFL-CIO Executive Council established the Commission on Strengthening State Federations and Area and Central Labor Councils.

The purpose of the special Commission is to provide recommendations to the AFL-CIO Executive Council on how to help modernize and revitalize state federations and area and central labor councils.

Because of the tremendous interaction and coordination between the BCTGM and state federations and central labor councils during the BCTGM's strikes in 2021 and 2022, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler asked BCTGM International

President Anthony Shelton to be a part of the special Commission.

As a Commissioner, President Shelton led site visits at the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, the North Carolina AFL-CIO, Huron Valley Area Labor Federation (Michigan), and the Central Labor Council of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

President Shelton was one of a select group of Executive Council members to conduct site visits throughout the U.S. The Commissions full recommendations will be presented to the AFL-CIO Executive Council this summer.

Pictured here are photos of President Shelton participating in meetings at several of the locations.



N.C. State AFL-CIO site visit with AFL-CIO Pres. Liz Shuler.



Huron Valley Area Labor Federation (Michigan)



Central Labor Council of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.



Intl. Pres. Anthony Shelton (pictured far right) was joined at the N.C. State AFL-CIO by (L-R) Intl. Rep. Derrick Byrd, ATU Intl. Pres. John Costa and Intl. Rep. Randy Fulk.



# SOUTHERN REGION DELEGATES Meet In Houston

**BCTGM Southern Region Local Union officers and delegates met in Houston, Texas in early May for two days of meetings, speeches, presentations and strategizing.**

The annual conference was led by Southern Region Vice President Zack Townsend, with assistance from International Representatives Jason Thomas and Darrell Copeland.

Speaking to the delegates on the first day of the conference, BCTGM International President Anthony Shelton stressed the importance of communicating effectively with BCTGM members. “We all need to look at the way we

communicate with our members and ask ‘is it effective’? What can we do better? What new ways of communicating can we utilize?” Shelton asked the delegates.

Shelton also discussed the importance of Local Unions belonging to their respective AFL-CIO state federations and central labor councils; promoting the BCTGM scholarship program; initiating organizing drives; and, servicing members in the workplace.

Also speaking to the delegates were International Secretary-Treasurer David Woods, Assistant to the International President Harry Kaiser, Director of Organization John Price and Director of Research and Education Matthew Clark.



Intl. Pres. Shelton, Royce Stogner (L. 111), and Tommy Kelly (L. 25).



Intl. Rep. Darrell Copeland, Intl. Pres. Anthony Shelton, Southern Reg. Intl. Vice Pres. Zack Townsend and Intl. Rep. Jason Thomas.



Michael Wilson (L. 84), Darian Haggins (L. 336G) and Walter Prevett (L. 117G).

Vice President Townsend urged delegates to commit to organizing new workers and to challenge themselves and their members to become more involved in their communities, churches and local charities.

First-time delegate and President of Local 84 (Columbus, Ga.) Michael Wilson thought that being with other Local Union officers from the Southern Region was a great learning experience.

“We may deal with different companies in

different states throughout the Southern Region, yet the challenges we face are the same,” said Wilson.

Long-time President of Local 149 (Memphis) and BCTGM General Executive Board Member Letitia Malone was excited about the future of the Southern Region. “There are a lot of challenges we face in right-to-work states with anti-worker state governments, but the locals here want to organize, get more involved politically and energize their members,” said Malone.



The L. 111 (Dallas, Tex.) delegation



Letitia Malone (L. 149), Sharita Clemmons (L. 65) and Oleda Ransom (L. 390G).



Cedric Wilson (L. 390G) and Emile Sigeo (L. 352G).



Intl. Secy.-Treas. David Woods (right) presents Intl. Pres. Anthony Shelton with a certificate honoring his 50 years of dedicated Union membership.

# Western Conference Delegates

**More than 50 delegates and guests of the BCTGM Western Conference met in Reno, Nevada in mid-April for four days of meetings, presentations and planning.**

The conference was presided over by Local 31 (Long Beach, Calif.) Financial Secretary Doyle Townson and Local 24 (San Francisco, Calif.) Financial Secretary Joe Biringer.

The Western Conference includes all Local Unions in the BCTGM's Western Region of the United States. Local Unions from California, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico and Utah sent delegates to the conference.

In his address to the delegates, BCTGM International President Anthony Shelton discussed the need for Local Unions to focus energy on servicing all of the shops they represent. "We are at our strongest when we



Floyd Hoggan (L. 401), Cynthia Vasquez (L. 37)



Darren Hamman, Andrew Stern and Taylor Almond of L. 114.



Kayleb Harrison, Juan Labra Jr. and Shawn Fowler of L. 282G.



Intl. Pres. Anthony Shelton (left) and Intl. Secy.-Treas. David Woods.

# es **MOTIVATED** Moving Forward

have active stewards; when we speak with our members and walk through our plants; when we educate our members on who we are and when we communicate effectively,” said Shelton.

International Secretary-Treasurer David Woods introduced new Local 401 (Salt Lake City, Utah) member and delegate Jason France from the recently organized Danone dairy facility in Salt Lake City. “Most of us come into our workplaces and the contract is already in place. Brother France helped to organize his

facility and helped to successfully negotiate a first contract,” said Woods. Delegates gave France a standing ovation following the introduction.

Also addressing the delegates were Assistant to the International President Harry Kaiser, Director of Organization John Price, Research & Education Director Matthew Clark.

Delegates broke into committees to prepare reports on Western Region organizing, collective bargaining updates and legislative activities.



Intl. Pres. Anthony Shelton introduces Western Region Intl. Vice Pres. Shad Clark (right) and Intl. staff.



(L-R) Intl. Reps. Karrie Setters, Andrew Gutierrez, L. 401 Pres. Floyd Hoggan and newly organized member Jason France.



Joe Biringer and Oscar Hernandez (L. 24).



Cameron Taylor (L. 364) and Asst. to the Intl. Pres. Harry Kaiser.



# EDUCATION Key to *Growth* of new Local Union Officers

**More than 50 new Local Union officers and financial secretaries successfully completed the International Union’s New Officers Training education conference at the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS) in Linthicum, Md.**

Twenty-seven Local Union principal officers and business agents participated in the week-long session that focused on Local Union administration, organizing, contract negotiation and communicating with members. These sessions were led by Research & Education Director Matthew Clark, with help from International Secretary-Treasurer David Woods, International Director of Organization John Price, Assistant to the President Harry Kaiser, Director of Communications Corrina Christensen and Director of Digital Media Michelle Ellis.

International President Anthony Shelton



spent time at the training center observing the Local Union officers in action and speaking with participants about his own experiences as a Local Union officer and a 50-year member of the BCTGM.

Longtime Local Union leaders Local 6 (Philadelphia) President Hank McKay and Local 68 (Baltimore, Md.) President Gary Oskoian were invited to give their insight and experience on negotiations, organizing and running a productive Local Union.

Additionally, more than 20 participants took part in a two-day Local Union financial secretary training led by BCTGM International Director of Finance and Administration Kurt Yeager. This extensive training focused on reading and writing financial reports, filling out and sending per capita reports and auditing Local Union finances.





**“Women are made up different. We have the ability to carry our load and still have the ability to help others. I’m always there for my members, regardless of what is going on with me. The Union gives me strength.”**

– Ginny Purcell, Pres. Local 317T (Greensboro, N.C.)



**“As a member of this Union and a Union woman, I am made stronger by the drive to stay informed, involved and active.”**

– Bao Button, VP/Rec. Secy. Local 125 (San Leandro, Calif.)

**“What makes me a strong Union woman is the knowledge, lived experiences and passion instilled in me by my predecessors.”**

– Taylor Almond, Bus. Agt. Local 114 (Portland, Ore.)

**“Both of my grandfathers were union members – one a BCTGM member at Sunbeam Bread; the other a UAW member at Caterpillar, where he went through three strikes. I have learned from the best. My name Mark means ‘Strong Defender’ and I will be in your corner and always a leader.”**

– Mark McKown, Pres. Local 103G (Decatur, Ill.)

**“The Union is a vital part of who I am. It is all about dignity, respect and improving life for everyone.”**

– George Leaman, Fin. Secy./Bus. Agt. Local 406 (Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada)



L. 252 Pres. Louis Tancsics (left) and 406 Fin. Secy./Bus. Agt. George Leaman (right).

**“I am a union leader because the BCTGM has taken care of me for 33 years! When I started in 1990, I knew I needed a union job. It is time to help the next generation of BCTGM members.”**

– Steven Peters, Local 9 (Seattle, Wash.)

**“I am a Union leader to further protect the rights and enforce the rights of my members and our CBA. It is my responsibility to educate the younger members to rise up in the Union.”**

– Louis Tancsics, Pres. Local 252 (Calgary, Alberta, Canada)

**“I am a union leader because I earned the trust and respect of the working people in my plant. I love to help people no matter what.”**

– Michael Wilson, Pres. Local 84 (Columbus, Ga.)

# Newly Organized Danone Workers Ratify First Agreement

**BCTGM Local 401 (Salt Lake City, Utah) members employed at the Danone North America milk processing facility in Salt Lake City overwhelmingly ratified their first union contract.** The new agreement covers nearly 100 workers in production, maintenance, shipping and quality control. The facility produces Horizon milk products.

Workers at the dairy voted to join the BCTGM in September after a spirited organizing campaign. Negotiations on a first contract began in February.

Director of Organization John Price led the negotiations under the direction of the negotiating committee and the new members. “For most of these workers, this was the first time they had been involved in the negotiating process. We wanted it to be open and transparent and to include as many voices and ideas as we could,” said Price. Workers initially rejected the first settlement, but overwhelmingly passed it after modifications

were made in further bargaining.

For the first time these workers will have guaranteed annual wage increases, a grievance procedure protecting their right to due process, seniority rules, job bidding and scheduling, vacation and holidays protected by their union contract.

Price was assisted by International Representatives Karrie Setters and Andrew Gutierrez and negotiating committee members Local 401 President Floyd Hoggan, Local 401 members Jason France, Derrick Rice and Iona Leulu.



## West Jordan Danone Members Approve New Contract

A new four-year agreement was successfully negotiated between Danone North America and BCTGM Local 401 for workers at the yogurt plant in West Jordan, Utah.

The new agreement contains annual wage increases and shift differentials, maintenance of health benefits, an increase in the tool allowance, changes to scheduling language, improved language in the grievance procedure, and new paid time off language.

The contract was negotiated by Director of Organization John Price, International Representative Karrie Setters and negotiating committee members Local 401 President Floyd Hoggan, members Rick Durant, Boyd Russell, Paul Kalt and Christopher Wood.





# Houston Stewards Embrace Education

**Twenty Local 163 (Houston, Tex.) stewards from Bimbo Bakeries USA successfully completed a steward education conference in March.** The training was run by BCTGM International Research & Education Director Matthew Clark.

The two-day education conference focused on teaching the roles and responsibilities of union stewards by using role playing, small group activities

and focusing on plant-specific challenges faced by stewards regularly.

Stewards from production and distribution were eager to learn more about the International Union, how to “talk union” and how to properly determine and investigate a grievance. Because Texas is a “Right-to-Work” (for less) state, there were also discussions about internal organizing and communication strategies.



# Spotlight on Local 351 Solidarity

More than 100 dedicated BCTGM Local 351 (Albuquerque, N.M.) members make bread and buns at the at Bimbo Bakeries USA Albuquerque bakery. Pictured here are some of the hardworking bakers of Local 351.



Mitchell Benally



Robin Camidge



Deion Lucero



Maria Ramirez



Maria Sanchez



Alexis Barrerio Mesa



Oscar Herrea

# *Kellogg's Members,* **Company Reps** **Volunteer at Food Bank**

**Building communication and improving working relationships topped the agenda for the Kellogg's Union Advisory Committee meetings in Lancaster, Pa.**

Local Union leaders from Locals 3G (Battle Creek, Mich.), 374G (Lancaster, Pa.), 252G (Memphis, Tenn.) and 50G (Omaha, Neb.), together with management from each of the Ready-to-Eat Cereal plants and Kellogg's officials, met to discuss issues and plans related to the spin-off of the company's cereal division into the new W.K. Kellogg's.

After a tour of the Lancaster cereal plant, the Union members and Kellogg's representatives volunteered to fill food donation boxes at Blessings of Hope, a regional food warehouse.

Blessings of Hope is a nonprofit food dissemination center in Lancaster. The organization works with large food companies to reduce food waste by repackaging food items into boxes for distribution to partner organizations and families in need of support.

BCTGM International Representatives Lisa Gregory and Darrell Copeland attended the meetings. "Following the Kellogg's strike in 2021, our Locals established good working relationships with plant management. These meetings and this joint community service effort helps to build upon those relationships and ease the way in this time of uncertainty," notes Gregory.



**Kellogg's members assemble donation boxes. Pictured here are Chris Haynes (L. 50G), Donnie Millbrookes (L. 252G), Keith White (L. 374G) Kelly Stokes (L. 3G), Trevor Bidelman (L. 3G), Rob Down (L.50G) and Rob Eafen (L.252G).**



## Oldest Tobacco Local

On March 6, 1890, the employees of the Bloch Brothers Company in Wheeling, West Va. held a meeting to discuss organizing a Union under the American Federation of Labor. Under the name "Tobacco Workers Union No. 4087", the workers joined the Ohio Valley Trades and Labor Assembly. Later, Local 4087 joined the American Federation of Labor.

At a special meeting on June 25, 1895, the Local voted to apply for a charter in the National Tobacco Workers' Union of America. With the overwhelming ballot in favor of joining the movement to unite workers in the tobacco industry, the Local became Local No. 2 under the new National Union.



In September 1899, the National Tobacco Workers' Union of America became the Tobacco Workers' International Union and Local 2 was granted a charter two months later.

Today, Local 2T in Wheeling, West Va. is the oldest tobacco local in the BCTGM.

Pictured here holding the original Local 2T charter are (left to right) Intl. Rep. Derrick Byrd, L. 2T Pres. Rick Rose, Vice Pres. Tim Haley, Rec. Secy Dave Reeves, Sgt. of Arms Andrew Haley, member Bob Fuller, Fin. Secy. Nadine Shaw.

## Local 270T Ratifies New Agreement

The members of Local 270T (Wilson, N.C.) who work at Alliance One International unanimously ratified a new agreement.

The new three-year pact includes language that allows vacation time to junior employees more quickly; significant wage increases throughout the life of the agreement; added to AD&D coverage; improved life insurance; enhanced funeral leave pay, and more.

"This is an unprecedented new agreement," reflects International Representative Randy Fulk who led the contract talks. "Our negotiating committee worked hard to bring back a great package to the members and the Local 270T committee members



were very appreciative for the assistance they received from International Union staff," concludes Fulk.

BCTGM members at the Alliance One plant process tobacco leaf.

Photo: Intl. Rep. Randy Fulk, L. 270T Vice Pres. Willie Pitt, Pres. Tracy Taylor and Intl. Rep. Derrick Byrd.

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