



# WHITE COLLAR

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO, CLC

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## Bristow Mechanics Join OPEIU!

In a National Mediation Board (NMB) secret ballot election, helicopter mechanics employed at Bristow US, LLC on February 13, 2013 voted by 141-82 for representation by OPEIU. The unit consists of 258 airframe and powerplant mechanics (A&Ps) and shop technicians. OPEIU Local 107 also represents pilots employed by the same company.

“This was a difficult organizing campaign that included four elections held over a number of years, one of which ended in a tie,” said Senior International Representative and Organizer Jeff Rusich. “But we had a strong and very active committee that wouldn’t give up and showed their fellow mechanics the benefits of union representation. Several A&Ps and shop techs worked together diligently for one common cause, and they deserve a lot of credit for this victory!”

The vote came after an animus anti-union campaign waged by the company. Managers routinely wore “Vote No” buttons and met with employees one-on-one to discourage them from voting for the union. Anti-union signs were also posted throughout the workplace.

“Eventually, the mechanics saw the

difference between how the pilots represented by OPEIU and the mechanics without representation are treated,” said Rusich. “They came to understand that because of the union, the pilots had larger wage increases, better working conditions and protections that they didn’t have. They realized they wanted the same things, including protection from the disrespect and disparaging treatment they were subjected to by their managers.

“The mechanics were also facing a new evaluation system implemented by

management that is very subjective,” Rusich continued. “Ultimately, they wanted to have a voice in how they were treated, and the ability to collectively bargain over their working conditions, wages and benefits.”

“The organizing committee, Jeff Rusich and the support of Local 107 pilots are the reason for this successful election,” said Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler. “We’re excited at the prospect of bargaining a first contract for these new members in the near future.”

## Las Vegas Taxi Drivers Strike at YCS!

Full story on page 3.



Nearly 1,000 striking drivers, represented by ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873, demonstrate at the headquarters of Yellow Checker Star Transportation (YCS) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

### INSIDE



5

Union Plus College Savings Grant Deadline Extended

6

Local 29 Ratifies Contract with Anthem Blue Cross

6

ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 Swears in New Officers

8

Rising Stars Continue to Shine

All Together —Work Connects Us All!



## Income Flat For 99 Percent, But Not For The 1 Percent

By Michael Goodwin, International President

In a recent report by Emmanuel Saez, an economist at the University of California, Berkeley, incomes were flat for 99 percent of Americans, but not for the 1 percent in the 2010-11 recovery, where incomes rose more than 11 percent. In the same period incomes dropped 0.4 percent for the 99 percent.

The disparity between top earners and everybody else can be attributed, in part, to differences in how the two groups make their money. The wealthy have benefited from a 4-year boon in the stock market, while high rates of unemployment have continued to hold down the income of wage earners. The high unemployment rate depresses wage growth for the 99 percent.

An analysis of the data in the report by Mr. Saez, and other reports, shows that income inequality, as measured by the proportion of income for the top 1 percent, reached its height shortly before the recession hit in 2009. While the recession hit wealthy families, their earnings have snapped back, if not to their 2007 peak.

The same is not true for average working families. After adjusting for inflation, median family income of \$50,054 in 2011 has declined over the last two years and is about 9 percent lower than it was in 1999!

Excluding earnings from investment gains, the top 10 percent of earners took 46.5 percent of all income in 2011, the highest proportion since 1917. It is anticipated that in 2012, the top 1 percent income will likely surge due to booming stock prices, as well as the retiming of income to avoid the higher 2013 tax rates, referring to income tax increases for the wealthy that were passed by Congress in January. The incomes of the other 99 percent will likely grow much more modestly.

Declining wages for working families and persistent high levels of inequality weighed heavily in President Obama's State of the Union address in February, where he proposed raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$9.00 an hour, which would lift the earnings of 15 million workers by the end of 2015.

The president said, "Let's declare that in the wealthiest nation on earth, no one who works full time should have to live in poverty." He proposed closing the gap of inequality by increasing taxes on a small group of the wealthiest families and expanding aid to lower and middle class families through programs like the

gears at each other as to who is responsible for the deep mandatory across the board cuts that began in March 2013, because an agreement was not reached between the White House and the Congress. An agreement must include revenue increases and spending cuts, both of which would affect the incomes of Americans — but the implementation of the sequester is much worse, and is creating untold collateral damage to the 99 percent.

Most Americans demand an agreement and don't want to see the sequester continued, knowing it only hurts the incomes of the 99 percent more than they already are and we can't afford it to

*The president said, "Let's declare that in the wealthiest nation on earth, no one who works full time should have to live in poverty." He proposed closing the gap of inequality by increasing taxes on a small group of the wealthiest families and expanding aid to lower and middle class families through programs like the Affordable Care Act. Many of the Obama administration's progressive policies have been aimed at blunting the effects of income inequality.*

Affordable Care Act. Many of the Obama administration's progressive policies have been aimed at blunting the effects of income inequality. Mr. Saez noted that the recent policy changes are modest relative to the changes that took place following the Great Depression of the 1930s.

All of this means that President Obama is on the right track as he fights to end this manufactured crisis facing the country, known as the 2013 "sequester." Everyone is pointing fin-

continue. But Republicans stood their ground, and they continue to fight efforts by the president and Congressional Democrats to find a solution to the budget deficit.

In the interest of continuing to fight for the 99 percent, we ask all OPEIU members to contact their representative in Congress and urge them to reach an agreement with the White House. We need to repeal the sequester, but this can only happen if both sides join together to find a balanced solution.

## Las Vegas Taxi Drivers Strike at YCS!

**T**axi drivers employed at Yellow-Checker-Star Transportation (YCS) in Las Vegas, Nevada have been on strike since Sunday, March 3, 2013 due to the company's unfair labor practices (ULP) of refusing to provide the union with information relative to collective bargaining and other violations. There are 1,703 drivers in the bargaining unit who are represented by the Industrial, Technical and Professional Employees Union (ITPEU)/OPEIU Local 4873.

Local 4873 filed ULP charges against the company with the National Labor Relations Board on Friday, March 1 and drivers authorized the strike to begin at 12:01 on Sunday morning.

In addition, YCS unilaterally declared an impasse and imposed its version of the contract on the drivers. "Together, we had a refusal to provide relevant information and an imposed contract," said ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis Arrington. "The drivers were left with no choice but to move forward with the strike," Arrington concluded.

Nearly 1,000 striking drivers have been demonstrating each day outside the YCS headquarters in Las Vegas, carrying signs and wearing shirts that demand respect and dignity for drivers. Despite the striking drivers respectful and orderly demonstration, several of them were victims of a pepper spray attack by a driver crossing the picket line.

Federal Mediator Kitty Simmons called a meeting between Local 4873 and YCS at the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) headquarters in Las Vegas for Wednesday, March 6, but no progress

was made at the meeting. No further meetings were scheduled as of this writing.

OPEIU and ITPEU officers and staff have been working around the clock in Las Vegas to bring about a resolution to the strike. ITPEU President Arrington and International President Michael Goodwin have met with the membership on a weekly basis to provide strike updates and distribute strike benefit payments of \$275 per week to each driver.

The union has also employed a number of tactics to engage community support, including advertising in several Las Vegas newspapers, conducting demonstrations at Las Vegas' McCarran airport and on Las Vegas Boulevard, known as the "Strip," as well as conducting many interviews with

local radio and television stations.

ITPEU President Arrington, ITPEU Representative T. Ruthie Jones and Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski are representing the union in contract negotiations with YCS. Bargaining began for a renewal agreement on September 12, 2012. After fifteen bargaining sessions, in November 2012 a tentative agreement was reached, which was overwhelmingly rejected by the drivers. A second contract offer was later rejected, after which the company began to implement contract changes without agreement with the union.

The union was working toward strike resolution when this edition went to press. An update will be provided in the next *White Collar*.



ITPEU President Dennis Arrington conducts a membership meeting with YCS striking drivers.



Cars topped with signs reading "Respect Drivers, No Hiring Strike Breakers" and "Stop Unfair Labor Practices," drive the terminals at Las Vegas' McCarran airport and the "Strip" to make the community aware of YCS's unfair treatment of taxi drivers.

### WHITE COLLAR

Official Organ of  
OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES  
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## Letters to the Editor



**OPEIU reprints letters from our members on various issues. We invite our readers to continue to share their opinions with us, whether in support of or in opposition to our own. Debate is healthy and welcomed in this union. Letters are edited for length only, not content. Remember: Anonymous letters will not be printed.**

**You can also reach us on the web: [www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org)**

### Dear Secretary-Treasurer Mahoney:

Thank you for your letter to Kris Bucci, president of OPEIU Local 494, dated June 4, 2012, awarding me the OPEIU Howard Coughlin Memorial full time scholarship.

(I remember it was dated June 4 because that was my 18th birthday!!)

At Local 494's Membership Meeting on July 9, my mom (who is retired from Local 494 and currently works part-time in the

Local Union office) and my dad were with me when the award was presented to me.

It was a very special moment for me because I knew some of the people in the audience, having met them when I would go to my mom's workplace.

I'm very happy that the OPEIU hands out this award every year; it helps out so many families and I'm very proud to have been this year's recipient.

Sincerely,  
**Claire McCarthy**  
Southfield, Michigan

### Dear Officers and Members of OPEIU:

I am extremely honored to be one of this year's recipients of the Howard Coughlin memorial scholarship. This scholarship will help defray the costs of my education at Boston University and I truly appreciate your organization's commitment to undergraduate education. Thank you all so much for your generosity!

Sincerely,  
**Emily Tillo**  
Jacksonville, Florida

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## Apply Now for the 2013 Summer Camp!

**N**ow is the time to apply for the 2013 Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beaugard Memorial Scholarship Fund. The deadline is May 15, 2013, so apply today.

The Scholarship Fund offers an opportunity for children of OPEIU members to attend a summer camp and learn how a union works and why being in a union will provide them with better wages and benefits. They will also learn about issues such as gender discrimination (why women are often paid less for the same job), all while enjoying fun activities such as arts and crafts, basketball, canoeing, softball, swimming and volleyball. The camp is offered to children between the ages of 13 and 16. There are only 20 spaces available and applications are selected on a first come, first served basis.

Further information and an application to attend the camp, as well as information about all OPEIU Scholarships, can be obtained by visiting our website at [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org), and clicking on Member Resources/Union Scholarships.

## Union Plus College Savings Grant Program Ending!

**Deadline Extended to  
May 31, 2013**

**T**he Union Plus 529 College Savings Grant Program is ending as of March 31, 2013 but the deadline has been extended to May 31!

Amid news reports that student debt is now larger than credit card debt in the U.S., working families can use all the help they can get to cover the costs of higher education. That's why the Union Plus 529 College Savings Grant was created to give a \$500 grant (as long as funds are available) to union members and union retirees who open a new 529 college savings or a pre-paid tuition account after July 1, 2011.

Your 529 account beneficiary must be 12 years old or younger at the time you open your 529 account. Once you open the account, you must build savings of at least \$1,000.

Go to [www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org) and click on Legal and Education for more information on the 529 college savings grant program today! Remember, the special extended deadline is May 31, 2013.

## OPEIU Podiatrists Can Help Members with Diabetic-Related Foot Issues

**A**ccording to International Vice President and Guild 45 President John Mattiacci, DPM, the Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine (TUSPM) has recently collaborated with corporate partner, Devon Medical Products, to open the first podiatric-run lymphedema and diabetic ulcer clinic in Philadelphia at the Foot and Ankle Institute.

Under the direction of Dr. Mattiacci, who is also the dean of the TUSPM, the goal of both TUSPM and Devon within this merger is to prevent amputation for future patients by treating their lymphedema symptoms early and quickly with the help of the excellent team of podiatrists at Temple.

Devon Medical Products is a global medical device manufacturer and distributor that provides podiatric-focused devices. Their product line includes the extriCARE™ Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) system, the CircuFlow™ series of lymphedema compression pumps, and the ArterioFlow™ arterial compression pump. These devices address the distress patients face when entering the Foot and Ankle Institute with lymphedema, diabetic ulcers and non-healing wounds.

TUSPM and Devon Medical Products released an advertisement in the Philadelphia Metro newspaper, which ran for one month. The success rate of this advertisement far surpassed expectations as more than 120 patients have planned their appointments. Even with the final advertisement running on November 15, 2012, calls have continued at a rapid pace into 2013.

"Our mission is to reduce the need for amputation," said Dr. Mattiacci. "If you are suffering from massive leg swelling, or lymphedema, pain and itching in the legs, non-healing wounds, diabetic foot ulcers, various types of venous insufficiencies and arterial deficiencies related to diabetes that cause swelling or poor blood circulation, please contact Temple Podiatry and our specialized team who, with Devon partners, will address your symptoms immediately. We have union podiatrists in many states and can help you find one, as well as offer a discounted service for union members. We are also available to provide advice to any podiatrist reading this about diabetic ulcer care and lymphedema." For lymphedema appointment scheduling, please contact TUSPM at 215-625-5289.

### *What Does Labor Want?*

*We want more schoolhouses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures...*

*-Samuel Gompers*

## Local Union News

### Local 29 Ratifies Contract with Anthem Blue Cross



The Anthem Blue Cross bargaining committee pictured are (left to right) Ruby Dhillon, Holly Carey, Trustee Kathy Collier, Rubyn, Lorri Jauch and Debra Daniel.

After five months of negotiations, Local 29 members at Anthem Blue Cross/WellPoint in the Rancho Cordova, California office unanimously voted to approve modifications to the collective bargaining agreement. Local 29, which has had a contract at the Anthem Blue Cross of California since 1977, represents 175 members at the Rancho Cordova office. Some of the highlights of the contract, which had no takeaways, include wage increases of 7.5 percent over the three-year term, the addition of more work-at-home positions, a \$1,900 net signing bonus, an increase to the health and welfare cap, and an improvement to bargaining unit seniority and job posting language.

“The bargaining unit was strong and stood in solidarity, organizing t-shirt solidarity days and making it clear to the company they wanted a fair contract with no takeaways. The bargaining committee worked tirelessly to obtain a contract,” said International Vice President and Local 29 President/Business Manager Tamara R. Rubyn.

### Local 4873 Swears In New Officers



International President Michael Goodwin swears in the new officers of the Industrial, Technical and Professional Employees Union (ITPEU)/OPEIU Local 4873 on February 12, 2013 in Phoenix, Arizona. Pictured (front row) are Joe Serrano, executive board member; Dennis R. Arrington, president; T. Ruthie Jones, executive board member; Wilma Zimmerman, executive board member; (back row) Goodwin; Lena Bailey, executive board member; Cindy Diehm, vice president; and Dennis Conley, secretary/treasurer.

### Local 22 Wins Grievance at St. Vincent, Contract at Humana

In February 2012, Local 22 in Little Rock, Arkansas was notified by St. Vincent’s hospital administration that the union would no longer be allowed into new employee orientation. After filing a grievance with no resolution, Local 22 filed a charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) regarding the change in orientation practice. In June 2012, the hospital approached the union with the desire to reach an agreement. “Due to changes in hospital administration, the process took much too long,” said Local 22 President Paige Yates. “But in January 2013, Local 22 finally came to an agreement with administration.”

Also from Local 22, after a year of negotiations, the union has ratified a three-year agreement with Humana, Inc., in Kansas City, Kansas that includes a three percent across the board increase

each year and a \$500 signing bonus. Pictured



are the Humana negotiating committee, from left to right, (front row) Clarice Stacker, Cindy Latz, (back row) Donna Collins, Pat Tenner, Becky Deardorff and International Representative Shelia Peacock.

## Local Union News

### Local 2 Young Workers Committee “Steps Up”

The young union activists of Local 2 are ready to take on the challenge of energizing and motivating their fellow young union members. The Local 2 “Step Up” Young Workers Committee understands the need to create an active and engaged membership that crosses all ages, genders and races. They are working to get the newer and younger members more involved in Local 2, OPEIU, and the labor movement.

The committee was formed after several Local 2 members attended the AFL-CIO Next Up Young Workers Summit in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2011. They were inspired to act and collectively wrote and signed a letter to the leadership of Local 2. The resolution was approved and the committee was created. The mission statement of the Local 2 “Step Up” Young Workers Committee is “to educate, engage, and empower the younger membership; promote solidarity and coalition building; bridge the gap between younger, newer and experienced members; and improve the lives of members and families through collective action, social activism, and community service.”

In February 2013, the committee held a meeting to review their goals and mission, discuss new ideas to encourage the participation of young workers and coordinate efforts to organize. The meeting was attended by committee Chair Christopher Levy from the National Labor College; committee Vice-Chair Caniesha Washington from AFGE, and committee members Jorae Williams and Chelsea Bland from AFGE. Attending their first committee



Local 2’s “Step Up” Young Workers Committee, left to right, are (front row) Erin Farmer, Jorae Williams, Jennifer Li, Caniesha Washington, Shannon Harvey, Jason Kauffman, (back row) CJ Stuart, Kale Cristensen, Christopher Levy and Tyler Brueggenjohan.

meeting were AFL-CIO Young Workers Advisory Council member Michelle Wyvill from IAM, Jennifer Li and Shannon Harvey from AFGE, and Erin Farmer, Jason Kauffman, Tyler Brueggenjohan, CJ Stuart, and Kale Cristensen from IBEW. Bruce Wolf, a retired unionist and Local 2 Executive Board member, also attended to show the support of the Local 2 leadership.

The participants discussed what issues were important for young workers, how they think the union can address them, and what types of activities and events can attract and engage the younger members. The group identified that a lot of the issues for young workers are the same as for all working people — equality, good wages, and jobs. The group discussed the importance of educating all new hires (young and older) on what a union is, the history of the labor movement, and how OPEIU works.

Everyone agreed that the Local Union needed to do a better job of educating members on union basics including contracts and rights as well as national and global issues. Young people want to understand the union and be encouraged to participate. The committee looks forward to networking and reaching out to other young unionists to include everyone in the future of the union.

Activities need to be fun and meaningful. The group’s ideas included community service, networking happy hours, union fun fair, game night, sports teams, cookouts, college campus events, book signings, poker night, and a LGBT night. Finding ways to incorporate education and discussion into these events will be a priority. They also agreed that creating a Facebook page to keep young members informed is a must.

The Young Workers Committee is hosting a happy-hour after the next Local 2 quarterly meeting and plans to talk to more union members about the goals of the committee. They hope to hold their next big event at the IBEW in Washington, D.C., which has a large number of young Local 2 members.

The “Step Up” Young Workers Committee is ready and willing to work with the OPEIU Rising Stars program and any other progressive groups to educate and empower union members to continue the fight for workers.

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## Rising Stars Continue to Shine

OPEIU Local Unions have taken up the mantle of the Rising Stars youth initiative ([www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org)) and are forming their own youth committees throughout the United States. Our goal is to create a master list of contact information for each Local Union youth committee. Through this network, youth committees can communicate with each other and share ideas for initiatives that have been effective in their Local Union.

OPEIU's Rising Stars youth initiative was inspired by the AFL-CIO's Next Up program ([facebook.com/aflcionextup](https://facebook.com/aflcionextup)). The mission of both groups is to "educate, empower and mobilize the next generation of young workers and promote leadership opportunities for young leaders in the labor movement."

Has your Local Union started a Rising Stars youth committee? Would you like to connect with other OPEIU young worker committees? If so, tell us all about it!

Local Union Number \_\_\_\_\_

Local Union Youth Committee Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to:

**OPEIU**  
Attention: Nicole Korkolis  
Director of Communication, Education and Research  
80 Eighth Avenue, 20th Floor  
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You can also complete this form online at [www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org), by clicking the "Rising Stars" logo on the homepage.