

President's Report  
April 2009

One of the most principled aspects of being part of a Union is the democratic process of holding elections. Having just completed our local Union elections it is both an exciting time for new officers and Team Reps as well as bitter sweet for those who lost their bids to represent the membership. Being in a position to represent your fellow workers is both an honor and a privilege. I personally am honored to be able to represent the members of 9231 and 9231-01 for the next three years. Despite the fact that I ran unopposed does not mean that there should not be a reflection on the past three years and a focus for the next three. This will be my third term in office and each one becomes more interesting and more challenging. We as a local Union have much work that lies ahead of us, and with the new leadership of our Union we intend to meet those challenges with unity, strength, education, communication and involvement.

First I would like to take stock in the last three years and try to find ways to improve on the last term. The most important component I want to work on is communication and that must start out with time on the floor. For me the most effective way to accomplish this is to schedule time on the floor. Beginning the week of April 27<sup>th</sup> my plan is to be on the floor on Friday's and I will be again posting my schedule on the Union website beginning in the month of May. Another vital component of communications needs to improve and that is direct communications to each of you via email or the Union website. The Team Reps are a vital component in communications as well and we will be utilizing them to a much larger degree in the coming years. Each month at Union Day the JAC gives a full report out to the team reps and we engage in open dialogue concerning current and ongoing issues. We must find a way to disseminate more information to our membership.

Education will be critical with new Team Reps and officers in the coming years. In the past term we held a one-week training class covering a variety of issues with the executive board, JAC and Team Reps. We will once again put together a training course for this same group. The education must not stop here, we must have continued training for our Union Leadership to cover important topics such as labor laws, communication skills, interpreting contract language, grievance handling, global economics, and other important topics. We will be setting up a structured training program in the weeks to come and once complete we will communicate to all of you what the plan is.

As members of a Union we are in select company as less than 10% of workers in the United States are privileged to be part of a Union. One of my goals for the next three years is to increase membership involvement in our Union. In the coming weeks and months we will be soliciting involvement from you for a variety of committees. For too long we have disenfranchised a large percentage of our membership by not seeking your help. We will be reshaping a number of our committees such as Safety, ICD, Cultural Diversity Committee, workers compensation, benefits, and others. Our Union will be in the next three to five years undergoing a transition as many of our brothers and sisters who transferred from Inland Steel will be retiring and enjoying the fruits of their labors. It will be time for our newer members to be in a position to step up to the challenges and to learn valuable lessons from those who have put our Union where it is today.

Finally and ultimately the most important goal is to continue the solidarity efforts we started more than two years ago in preparation for the last contract. We need to build on those efforts and get more people involved. Soon we will be refocusing our efforts on solidarity by bringing the SOLIDARITY Committee back and asking for your help in keeping the momentum going. While we don't have contract negotiations for three years it will be imperative that we begin the process now. We will be looking to hold monthly meetings at the hall and looking into installing some audio/visual equipment to provide web links and video capabilities to show once per month. It will be our version of town hall meetings and open forum to discuss issues and to educate our membership.

As you can see we have a great deal of work to do and together with all of us working together we can endure this current economic dilemma as well as what future issues yet known. I would like to thank each of you for your continued support and look forward to serving the membership to the best of my ability. The challenges ahead will be many and will be difficult, but in the end only a strong Union can endure.

In Solidarity  
Todd Kegley