

UE LOCAL 155 NEWSLETTER

Amalgamated Employers - Eastern Pennsylvania & New Jersey
May 2020

Updates from Local 155 Officers and Executive Board

New Officers

Local 155 recently held nominations for 2020 officers, and the following union members became local officers (there were no contested nominations):

President	Jack Boyle, Tinius Olsen, Painter
Vice President	Mark Hinkel, Tinius Olsen, CNC Machinist
Treasurer	Pete Patel, Portescap, Senior Machine Operator
Executive Board	Steve Norris, Portescap, Senior Machine Operator
Executive Board	Tom Boyer, Portescap, CNC Set Up Operator
Trustee	Carl Boyle, Tinius Olsen, Packer

Other Updates

The 155 board spent 2019 organizing the local's finances, deciding which grievances to arbitrate, and attending trainings and regional meetings, among other things.



Local 155 members from Tinius Olsen and Stepan attended a UE sub-region training on Healthcare, Fair Discipline, and Member Engagement in October 2019 in New Jersey.

155 Shop Reports

Generation Lighting

Generation Lighting is a warehouse for ceiling lighting and ceiling fans in Burlington, New Jersey.

Generation Lighting management fired long-time chief steward and bargaining committee member, Tito Cruz, in April 2019 for allegedly fighting with another union member. This was an unjust firing because Tito did not start the fight, he avoided the other union member, and the two members never even touched each other. The stewards filed a grievance over Tito's discharge, and Local 155 sent the grievance to arbitration. The hearing was held in September, and the union won our case. The arbitrator said that the company didn't have just cause to fire Tito and restored him back to work with full back pay, back health insurance, back 401K contributions, etc. Tito says that he's grateful to be back at work. Welcome back Tito! We're glad that you got justice after being forced out of work for so many months.



Tito Cruz, Generation Lighting Bargaining 2018

155 Shop Reports Continued

Generation Lighting Continued

The warehouse is still open during the Coronavirus crisis. The members are concerned about the safety of so many people working in the building together. The union has been bargaining with the company over extra safety provisions, flexible schedules, and hazard pay.

This shop also recently had a steward election. The new stewards are: Ray Yonksie (chief steward), Luis Garcia Leon, Brian Perkins, Victor Ramos, Pete Torres, Rafael Vazquez-Rodriguez, and Frank Kasperowicz.



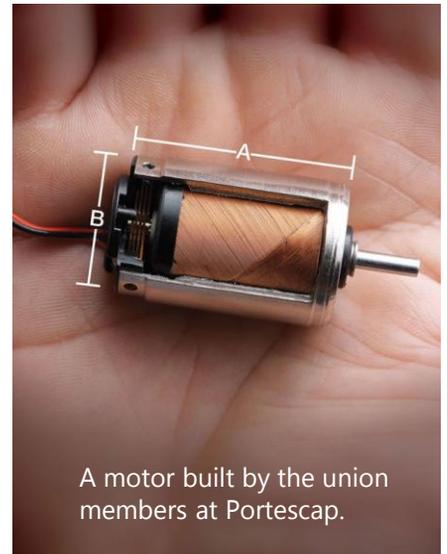
The day of Tito's 3rd step grievance hearing, union members put signs in their cars in the company parking lot to support him.

Portescap

Portescap makes micro surgical motors in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

The Portescap union members have been working through the Coronavirus crisis. The company plans to start making more ventilator motors. Many members are worried about having so many people working in one building (there are about 80 union members at Portescap), since public health authorities are advising to stay away from groups bigger than eight. The union representatives at Portescap have been discussing solutions with the company. The union committee has also been starting to think about their negotiations coming up this fall.

This shop also recently had a steward and union committee election. The chief steward is Sean Robinson, and the shop committee is Pete Patel, Steve Hughes, and Johnny Krider.



A motor built by the union members at Portescap.

Tinius Olsen

Tinius makes material testing instruments in Horsham, Pennsylvania.

Tinius Olsen closed for a week due to the Coronavirus, but it is back open again. Management agreed to some temporary changes to support union members during the epidemic. The company is providing safety gloves and masks, limiting access to the facility, allowing union members to be absent without attendance discipline, allowing them more flexibility on using vacation time, offering to loan members 75% of their pay if they take



Tinius Olsen members held signs to support the 2019 UE Local 506 & 618 strike in Erie, PA.

155 Shop Reports Continued

Tinius Olsen Continued

off work (with members repaying that pay after the crisis passes), disinfecting the building, providing hand sterilizing agents, and offering to help the members if they have trouble with their bills.

This shop recently had a steward and union committee election. The chief steward is Jack Boyle, and the shop committee is Mike Roberto, Dave Burns, and Dan Vargo.



Mark Hinkel, Local 155 Vice President, supporting workers organizing a new union at ESS in New Jersey in 2019.

Stepan Company

Stepan is a chemical company in Fieldsboro, New Jersey.

The plant has been staffed by a skeleton crew ever since the company implemented a voluntary separation plan in 2018. The members work tons of overtime. Many of the jobs that the company eliminated a couple of years ago have been coming back, however, as business picks back up. The stewards have resolved a number of grievances with the company. Contract bargaining is also coming up at Stepan this fall.

Stepan's chief steward is Paul Paradise, and the other stewards are Gerald Crawford, Bobby Jones, Wayne Brown, and Chris Coulton.



The Stepan New Jersey bargaining committee made t-shirts about the plant's understaffing during 2017 negotiations.

Hallcon

Hallcon drives railroad crews in and between rail yards. It's a national company, and Local 155 represents members in yards in Newark, Port Reading, Metuchen and Camden, New Jersey.

The UE has a national contract with Hallcon, and since the new collective bargaining agreement was settled there have been a lot of grievances to enforce it. The New Jersey Hallcon drivers also faced layoffs in the Croxton yard last year, because the company lost the contract for that railroad. The company has been doing a poor job of providing PPE to protect drivers from the Coronavirus.

The Hallcon stewards are Nrmeen Daood in the Oak Island yard and Mike Paige in the Pavonia yard.



New Jersey Hallcon drivers held a banner in front of the Croxton rail yard protesting poverty wages during 2019 negotiations.

155 Shop Reports Continued

M. Chasen & Son

Chasen makes mattress padding out of recycled materials in Irvington, New Jersey.

Chasen has been mostly shut down because the Coronavirus slowed down the business. However, the owner just received a Paycheck Protection Program loan through new Coronavirus legislation, so the union members got called back to work this month. We are very sad to report that one of the union members at Chasen lost his life to the Coronavirus – Willie Floyd. Willie was a shipping and receiving clerk who had worked at the factory for ten years. The members suspect that Willie may have gotten the virus because he had so much contact with outside vendors.

The stewards in this shop are Jerome Williams and Eduardo Danboyetia.



Some of the mattress padding manufactured by union members at Chasen.

Passaic Public Library

Passaic is a public city library in Passaic, New Jersey.

The library is currently closed due to COVID-19, and the members are getting paid. The Passaic steward, David Pointer, says that "everybody is doing well and we wish all the members... the same."



Passaic Library's 2018 bargaining committee, Orlando Pardiello and David Pointer

A CALL TO ORGANIZE
WORKER FIGHTBACK
IN THE FACE OF THE
COVID-19 CRISIS



United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America

Local 155 Office

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Local 155 Meeting Times

3rd Tuesday of the month,
5:30pm, Union office