



JUNE 2026

VOLUME 88, NO. 6

# SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

## SIU Out in Force to Promote American Maritime Industry

The SIU had another strong turnout for this year's Maritime Congressional Sail-In, a key event for the industry. Rank-and-file Seafarers joined union officials for a full day on Capitol Hill, where they promoted the Jones Act, cargo preference, the Maritime Security Program and more. SIU and Maritime Trades Department personnel gathered outside the Capitol Building before the day's meetings began; SIU President David Heindel is fourth from left in the second row. *Pages 2-5.*



## SIU Members Stand Out in D.C.



David Heindel

As reported in this edition, rank-and-file Seafarers were essential to the success of this year's Maritime Congressional Sail-In, one of our industry's most important events. Their presence on Capitol Hill made a strong and lasting impression, and they represented our union – and the entire maritime industry – with professionalism, knowledge, and pride.

I have already thanked those members personally, but I also wanted to do so publicly. When elected officials hear directly from the men and women who work in this industry every day, it carries a weight no report, briefing paper or lobbyist ever could. So, one last time, thank you and kudos on a job well done.

The Sail-In is a big undertaking, but the effort always proves worthwhile. Whether we are thanking old friends or introducing ourselves to new legislators and their staffs, we are obligated to keep our industry on the Capitol Hill radar. More than that, though, we are eager to do so. When you believe in something as strongly as we believe in both our union and the U.S. Merchant Marine as a whole, it's easy to be excited about spreading the message.

We're never short on vital maritime topics during these events, but this particular year proved especially packed in that regard. The Sail-In date was selected well before Operation Epic Fury and also prior to the Jones Act waiver that was issued back in March. In fact, we started getting wind of the possible waiver extension the morning of the Sail-In.

On that note, I thank our members across the country who contacted your legislators to object to the extension. As many of you know, we teamed up with the American Maritime Voices organization in promoting an easy but effective

way to reach out to members of Congress about the latest attack on the Jones Act. The SIU response was heartening, and can only help as this fight continues.

You have heard the expression "both things can be true" or words to that effect. I think it applies to this administration's stance on our industry. Overall, there's simply no question that they've been pro-maritime, from the recently released Maritime Action Plan to support for many components of the SHIPS for America Act to last year's executive order stating the desire to Restore America's Maritime Dominance. But they have missed the mark with this waiver and extension, which are not benefiting U.S. consumers.

Even worse from my perspective, the waiver and extension are sending the wrong message to current and future mariners. I am a regular user of social media and have seen numerous comments from the U.S. maritime workforce questioning whether their jobs will soon be eliminated. I've read other comments and questions from prospective mariners wondering if they're making a mistake by entering our industry. And of course, there are bound to be many more such conversations happening offline.

As I stated last month, our industry has never objected to a waiver when there's a legitimate need. We do object to this one, and if the initial waiver felt like a mistake, the extension felt like both a slap in the face and a clear sign of a bigger attack on our mariners, our shipbuilders, and our vessel operators.

We'll keep fighting.

### Progress in Middle East

As of this writing, two SIU-crewed ships have passed through the Strait of Hormuz and are in the process of returning to normal operations. On behalf of our entire union, I thank our U.S. military personnel for escorting and protecting those vessels, and I applaud our own members' dedication and positive attitude throughout their ordeal.

We remain in regular contact with our crews still in that area, and they are doing well. While it's impossible to know exactly how things will play out, I remain optimistic that our members will continue rising to the occasion, and if things escalate, we'll answer the call, as always.

## SIU's Orzechowski Among SIH Honorees

During his moment in the spotlight at a prestigious maritime industry awards dinner, SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski focused on the efforts of the host organization, New York-based Seafarers International House (SIH).

Orzechowski was one of three honorees at this year's Setting the Course event, which took place April 23 in New York City. Also receiving awards were Fred Finger, senior vice president at American Roll-On Roll-Off Carrier (ARC), and Rear Adm. John Okon, USN (Ret.), president of SUNY Maritime. Orzechowski and Finger each received an Outstanding Friend of Seafarers Award; Okon garnered a Special Recognition for Service to Seafarers Award.

During his brief acceptance speech, Orzechowski commended SIH for "doing vital, humane, indispensable work on behalf of mariners. To me, there's no greater calling."

SIH is a non-profit organization that assists upwards of 20,000 mariners and immigrants each year, providing local transportation, temporary lodging, basic necessities and other services. The group primarily helps foreign crew members in the ports of Albany, New York; Baltimore; Duluth, Minnesota; Houston; New Haven, Connecticut; and New York and New Jersey.

Addressing the crowd, Orzechowski noted that the maritime industry "normally doesn't get much attention unless there's a crisis, like the COVID-19 pandemic

or the military operation that began earlier this year in Iran. The latter mobilization hit home for me in more ways than one. Not only were members of my union potentially in danger from day one, my first sailing experience was through the Strait of Hormuz. So, their plight resonated with me."

He continued, "During times of peace, the U.S. Merchant Marine faces all the normal challenges that go with maritime careers. The work isn't easy; the separation from loved ones can take a toll even with the growth of shipboard internet; and even the best weather forecasts don't always stay ahead of Mother Nature. With that said, American mariners generally enjoy good pay and benefits; and, because of the U.S.-flag industry's high safety standards, their odds of returning home in good shape at the end of a voyage are exponentially in their favor.

"The same things cannot be said for many of our brothers and sisters on foreign-flag ships," Orzechowski added. "These are the individuals who benefit the most from the tremendous work being done by Seafarers International House, with support from organizations including the ones represented here tonight. Collectively, we are difference-makers, and if there's one thing for which I'll credit our industry, it's that we know when and how to pull together. Whether it involves promoting pro-worker, pro-maritime legislation, or responding to a crisis, or helping to

care for individual seafarers, we take a backseat to no one when it comes to teamwork."

He concluded, "The human element is what matters most to me.... In our industry, at least from what I've experienced, it matters even more because of our immersion in the trade. I have spent most of my adult life working in maritime, but it never feels like a job. It is a vocation, a calling, a passion and – yes – a mission. This seems true for so many people I've met and worked with over the years, from rank-and-file members to union officials, from company executives to port officials, and from faith-based and secular workers alike who go above and beyond in showing kindness to the world's mariners.... We know that what truly matters are the people on the ships and tugs and passenger ferries and every other type of vessel. Those are the individuals we serve. Those are the ones who most need our help. And those are the women and men who make me so proud and grateful to be here tonight."



This year's Setting the Course honorees are (from left) ARC VP Fred Finger, SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski, and SUNY Maritime President Rear Adm. John Okon.



The SIU contingent included (seated, from left) Seafarers Plans Administrator Maggie Bowen, VP Bryan Powell, President David Heindel and his wife, Mrs. and Mr. Tom Orzechowski, VP Joseph Soresi, and (standing) VP George Tricker.



This screenshot from an SIH video shows mariners who have benefited from the organization's services.

**Seafarers LOG** Official Publication of the Seafarers International Union  
 Volume 88, Number 6  
 June 2026  
[www.seafarers.org](http://www.seafarers.org)

The Seafarers LOG (ISSN 1086-4636) is published monthly by the Seafarers International Union; Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters, AFL-CIO; 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, MD 20746. Telephone (301) 899-0675. Periodicals postage paid at Southern Maryland 20790-9998. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Seafarers LOG, 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, MD 20746.

**Communications Director:** Jordan Biscardo  
**Assistant Communications Director:** Nick Merrill  
**Assistant Editor:** Aja Neal  
**Administrative Support:** Jenny Stokes



Copyright © 2026 Seafarers International Union, AGLIW. All Rights Reserved.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION  
**ILCA**  
 AFL-CIO/CLC/NOTA

**CARBON NEUTRAL**

**100% WIND POWER**

The SIU engaged an environmentally friendly printer for the production of this newspaper.

# SIU Meets with Lawmakers During Annual Sail-In

Once again, the SIU arrived on Capitol Hill with a purpose for this year's Maritime Congressional Sail-In: help legislators understand and remember the critical role that the maritime industry plays in the American way of life.

The Sail-In has become a major happening for all sectors of the U.S. maritime industry. This year's event, which took place April 22, included more than 150 people, making it the largest Sail-In since 2011. Those experts were divided into 30 smaller groups, taking part in 115 different meetings with legislators and their staffs throughout the day.

Buoyed by a large rank-and-file presence, the SIU turned out in force. Union participants included President David Heindel; Executive Vice President

Augustin Tellez; Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Orzechowski; Vice Presidents George Tricker, Dean Corgey, Joseph Soresi, Bryan Powell, Joe Vincenzo, and Sam Spain; Political and Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman; Assistant Political and Legislative Director Mario Torrey; Assistant Vice Presidents Ray Henderson, Amancio Crespo and Michael Russo; and Port Agent Kelly Krick. Additionally, the Maritime Trades Department was represented by Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jordan Esopa and former Executive Secretary-Treasurer Daniel Duncan.

The officials were joined by the most recent classes of Recertified Bosuns and Stewards: Recertified Bosuns **Gerardo Arroyo, Raul Colon Matos, Theophilus Essien, Antionne Kelly, Mohamed**

**Mohamed, Anthony Pace, Derik Rye and Scott Snodgrass;** and Recertified Stewards **Jason Beckford, Pauline Crespo Guillen, Jose Norales, Jacob Parilla, Dindo Reforsado and John Stephens.**

After a breakfast reception, the teams engaged in several hours of meetings in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. During the Sail-In, Congressman John Garamendi (D-California), Congressman Trent Kelly (R-Mississippi), President of the Shipbuilders Council of America Matt Paxton, and Schoeneman conducted a joint press conference in support of the SHIPS for America Act (for more information on the legislation, see Page 5).

The Sail-In concluded with the traditional reception for participants and guests.



Clockwise from left: Legislative Director Robert Hurd (Congressman John Garamendi's (D-California) office), Liberty Maritime's Charlie Papavizas, Patriot Maritime's Mark Handin, SIU President David Heindel, Recertified Bosun Anthony Pace, Transportation Institute's Stephanie Bowman and Brother Pace's wife.



From left to right: Van Enkevort Tug & Barge's Joshua Carpenter, Recertified Bosun Scott Snodgrass, Lake Carrier Association's Jim Weakley, Great Lakes Maritime Academy's Trisha Meier, SIU Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski and Laila Flemming (Congressman Hillary Scholten's (D-Michigan) office).



From left to right: AMO President Willie Barrere, Crowley Maritime's Andy Rabuse, SIU VP George Tricker, Majority Staff Director John Rayfield, Recertified Steward Jacob Parilla, Minority Staff Director Matt Dwyer, Transportation Institute President Sara Fuentes and PSA Penn Shipyard's John Brennan.



Senator Tim Kaine (D-Virginia) and MTD Executive Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus Daniel Duncan.



From left to right: Atlas Advocacy's Jon Wadsworth, SIU VP Joseph Soresi, Recertified Bosun Antionne Kelly, Legislative Director John Swords (Congressman Jim McGovern's office), USMMA Alumni Foundation's Marilyn Livi and MTD Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jordan Esopa.



From left to right: Jason Moyer (Congressman Wesley Hunt's (R-Louisiana) office), Kirby's Matt Woodruff, SIU VP Dean Corgey, US Ocean's Kevin Langford and Texas A&M Maritime Academy's Todd Sutherland and Allan Post.



From left to right: SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo, The Pasha Group's Greg Bunn, Recertified Bosun Raul Colon Matos and American Waterways Operators' Andrew Eisenberger.



From left to right: Federated Maritime's Leo Bonser, Liberty Global's Paul "Chip" Jaenichen, SIU VP Joe Vincenzo, the Transportation Institute's Chad Carlough and Recertified Steward Dindo Reforsado.



From left to right: Recertified Bosun Derik Rey, AMO's Gabe Giguere, Congresswoman Becca Balint (D-Vermont), USMMA Alumni Association's Brian Foy and SIU AVP Ray Henderson.



From left to right: SIU Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman, SIU Deputy Legislative Director Mario Torrey, MM&P's Dave Narby, Congressman Salud Carbajal (D-California), APL's Adam Peterson and Crowley Maritime's David Wood.



From left to right: CAMM's Captain Joseph Hartnett, USMMA Alumni Foundation's Randolph Johnson, Crowley Maritime's Ira Douglas, SIU Port Agent Kelly Krick and AMO's Christian Spain.



From left to right: AMO's Alaina Basciano, AMO's Melissa Cap, Congressman Chris Pappas (D-New Hampshire), USMMA Alumni Foundation's Mark Remijan and MTD Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus Daniel Duncan.



From left to right: USMMA Alumni Association's Richard Krahn, SIU AVP Michael Russo, Keystone's Cam Rathborne, Winston & Strawn's Bryant Gardner and Fairwater Maritime's Caleb Kerins.



From left to right: Recertified Bosun Gerardo Arroyo, APL's Karen Mendala, Congresswoman Val Hoyle (D-Oregon), MEBA's Erick Siahaan, Hapag-Lloyd USA's Dave Zimmerman and MM&P's Daniel Ginsberg-Jaeckle.



From left to right: APL's Kris Kubiak, American Maritime Congress's Fair Kim, AMO's Jeff Richards, Congressman Eric Sorensen (D-Illinois), Recertified Steward John Stephens and USMMA Alumni Association's Jennifer Williams.



From left to right: Transportation Institute President Sara Fuentes, Holly Hendricks (Congressman Steve Scalise's (R-Louisiana) office), Crowley Maritime's Andy Rabuse, AMO President Willie Barrere, Recertified Steward Jacob Parilla and PSA Penn Shipyard's John Brennan.



From left to right: Recertified Bosun Scott Snodgrass, posing with Sen. Todd Young (D-Indiana), the recipient of the Great Lakes Maritime Task Force's 2026 Legislator of the Year Award.



Immediately after his press conference on the SIU-backed SHIPS for America Act, Congressman John Garamendi (D-California) (third from left) poses with a group of SIU representatives.

## Labor Leaders Call for SHIPS Act To Revitalize Maritime Industry

*Editor's note: The following is an excerpt from a press release from Congressman John Garamendi's office. The SIU was heavily involved in both the press conference, as well as the congressional hearing that occurred on the same day.*

Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA-08), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee; Congressman Trent Kelly (R-MS-01), Chairman of the House Armed Services Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, Matt Paxton, President of the Shipbuilders Council of America, and Brian Schoeneman, Chairman of USA Maritime, held a joint press conference in support of the SHIPS for America Act to revitalize the maritime industry:

"Today, I am encouraged to see continued bipartisan consensus on the need to strengthen America's maritime industry. The SHIPS Act will do exactly that. We are committed to securing passage of this legislation and to continuing the vital work of revitalizing our maritime sector," said Congressman Garamendi. "Today's hearing on shipbuilding is an encouraging sign of growing bipartisan momentum and interest in both revitalizing our nation's shipbuilding industry and advancing the SHIPS Act. For over a year, we have seen promising progress, reflected in a growing coalition of supporters both on and off Capitol Hill, and we are confident that we can usher in a new era for American workers, shipbuilders, and our national security."

"We are a great nation because we are a great maritime nation. But for years, we've fallen behind in providing the maritime industry with the resources it needs. If we want to restore America's maritime strength, it will take robust investment in our shipbuilding industry in both military and commercial. We need to put more American-built ships in the water—ships that carry goods, support our economy, and strengthen our security. We also must maintain those ships and ensure we have the workforce to crew and support U.S.-flagged vessels with American workers," said Congressman Kelly. "We must push Congress, the Administration, industry, and all stakeholders to get this bill across the finish line. Time is of the essence. We need to take decisive steps and get this done."

"American shipyards can and must build the fleet of the future right here at home, and the SHIPS for America Act is the catalyst we need to get us there," said Matt Paxton, President of the Shipbuilders Council of America. "By aligning a national maritime strategy with stable investment, this bipartisan legislation recognizes the national security impact of our industry and would allow us to effectively counter global distortions in the shipbuilding and ship repair markets."

"The SHIPS for America Act represents the most meaningful maritime legislation in the last half century or more," said Brian Schoeneman, Chair of USA Maritime. "The critical need for a vibrant U.S. Merchant Marine and a revitalized American maritime industry is on display daily. We can't afford to wait any longer. It's time to get it done."

# 2 SIU-Crewed Ships Transit Strait of Hormuz

*Editor's note: At the request of the LOG office, Recertified Steward Rocky Dupraw submitted the following recap of his recent voyage aboard the Alliance Fairfax (Maersk Line, Limited). That vessel and the SIU-crewed CS Anthem (Crowley) made it through the Strait of Hormuz in early May, under U.S. military escort.*

It started February 28, at anchor, the day before our last port of call in the Persian Gulf. The night sky was filled with all types of ballistics, as Operation Epic Fury had begun. As the night calmed down, the next morning we pulled into port. As we were finishing cargo all hell broke loose. The watch standers reported multiple unidentified ballistic explosions in very close proximity. As fast as we could, we got out of the imminent danger zone.

For the next 2.5 months, we were constantly changing our location to keep out of harm's way. If the area we were in was compromised, we moved to a safer location. After the initial wave of violence, everything settled down a bit, until the early morning of March 7. About 0300 the security alarm went off. The 2M announced that there were drones flying overhead and four exploded nearby. All hands were to report to the citadel immediately. We ran full speed ahead until the threat was no longer. That had to be one of the scariest nights we had.

For the next month, all outside decks were closed. No working or walking was permitted. Morale was down and provisions, water and fuel were getting scarce. All we had were hopes and prayers, ifs and buts. It was like prison with a paycheck.

Once the ceasefire was announced, the company offered a crew change. While some took advantage,



Pictured aboard the *Alliance Fairfax* (Maersk Line, Limited) following a successful transit of the Strait of Hormuz are (from left) ABM Ramir Maldepena, 3M Steve Humbert, ABM Chris Barberan (front), Recertified Bosun James Bishop, ABW Gary Rushing, ABW Debbie Garcia, CM Ernest Caponegro, ABW Javulin Pollard (front), Capt. Brian Mercurio, Chief Engineer William Dickman, 2M Omalika Lipp, SA Miquella Wright, CC Greg Brown, Recertified Steward Rocky Dupraw, OMU Reny Arzu (rear), OMU Collyn Swopes, 2AE Luca Tallarini, 3AE Carlos Pineda, 1AE Joseph Glywasky and Electrician David Kelch.

most of us stayed. Most importantly, it gave us the opportunity to replenish our supplies. A couple more weeks go by and we all accepted the fate of the ship possibly being here for a couple of more months. That is when captain called everyone to the bridge and had us turn in all of our electronics. And just like that we went radio silent. Not a warning, not even to let our loved ones know. The next day a U.S. Marine detachment joined the ship. The captain informed us that the company and the Department of War had a plan for us and that we were going to make a run for it. We were instructed to stage our life jackets, immersion suits and a go bag (personal items) just in case we were attacked and had to abandon ship.

The next day at dusk, the engine department went down below, the captain, 2M and 3M were on the bridge. The rest of us were standing by in the citadel. And like ninjas in the night, we made it through the Strait of Hormuz undetected. The next day, everyone was so relieved that it was over. It was the first time in months that we were comfortable sleeping at night

... until 0100 in the morning. That's when the security alarm went off again. The captain reported drones flying overhead. Minutes after mustering in the citadel, we could hear helicopters and jets flying by. The military's overwatch had us covered. After a few hours and one last scare, it was finally over. We had made it past the blockade and we were safe. Project Freedom was a success!

The courage, strength and unity between our crew and the military was truly historic. It was a great honor to feed and serve our Marines, who were here to protect and serve us. The crew of the *Alliance Fairfax* would like to send a heartfelt thank you to the Trump Administration, Department of War, Maersk Line, Limited, SIU, MMP & MEBA for coordinating a successful historic Project Freedom. It was General Omar N. Bradley that said it best: "Bravery is the capacity to perform properly even when scared half to death."

And for all the fellow sailors still in the Persian Gulf, trust in God and keep your powder dry.

## Jones Act Waiver Extension Draws Vehement Objections

The Trump administration on April 24 extended its Jones Act waiver by 90 days rather than letting it expire in mid-May.

The SIU was among the first to voice opposition to the extension. In a statement posted April 27, the union noted in part, "At a time when the United States should be reinforcing its maritime strength, this action moves us in the opposite direction.... Extending this waiver is fundamentally at odds with the administration's stated 'America First' policy. You cannot claim to prioritize American industry, American jobs, and American security while simultaneously sidelining American ships and American crews in favor of foreign alternatives."

The SIU statement also pointed out that "despite the justification often cited for these waivers, there is no credible evidence that they deliver any meaningful or measurable relief for American consumers at the pump. Global oil prices – not domestic shipping laws – drive fuel costs. Repeated Jones Act waivers have failed to produce any sustained difference in gasoline prices, making this policy not only harmful to U.S. maritime interests, but ineffective in achieving its stated economic purpose."

The American Maritime Partnership, a major coalition which counts the SIU among its affiliates, stated, "This extension of an already historically long and ineffective Jones Act waiver is not only an affront to hundreds of thousands of hardworking Americans who put this country first every single day, it sabotages President Trump's agenda to restore American maritime dominance. Waiving the Jones Act exports American jobs to foreign carriers, allows them to skirt U.S. laws, and exposes the nation to national security threats by opening our maritime borders."

Both statements are available in full on the SIU website.

Many other organizations also voiced opposition to the extension. In one such instance, more than 100 business executives as well as maritime union officials wrote to congressional leaders asking them to reject the extension.

That letter pointed out, "The waiver was issued in response to energy supply disruptions from the conflict in the Middle East and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, with proponents promising relief at the pump. That promise has not been fulfilled. Gasoline prices have increased in every U.S. market since the waiver was issued – including markets not even serviced by Jones Act vessels.

"The primary driver of gasoline prices is the cost of crude oil on global markets, not domestic shipping logistics. In fact, Maritime Administration data suggests that foreign companies are engaging in disaster arbitrage – exporting American energy products overseas at higher world prices rather than relieving domestic consumers. U.S. fuel price issues are due to lack of availability, not challenges of Jones Act transportation."

The authors further pointed out, "The waiver's principal beneficiaries are not American workers or consumers – they are foreign and adversary-connected operators. MARAD data as of May 7, 2026, reveals that approximately 29 percent of completed waiver voyages involved vessels with ties to the People's Republic of China – whether through owner/operators headquartered in or jointly owned by Chinese entities, or through vessels constructed in Chinese shipyards. Additionally, 95 percent of completed voyages directly benefit foreign maritime companies that pay no federal or state taxes, do not comply with U.S. immigration laws or Coast Guard safety regulations, giving them a built-in cost advantage over American companies in American waters.

Allowing Chinese-affiliated operators and Chinese-built vessels to capture market share in American coastwise trade – under a waiver issued for national defense during a time of war – undermines the Administration's stated policy of restoring America's maritime dominance and national security and constitutes profiteering by opportunistic oil traders and foreign shipping companies."

After further noting that the waiver threatens capital flowing to American shipyards and creates border

and immigration security risks, the writers added, "The Jones Act is not merely an economic statute; it is a cornerstone of American national defense.... The Jones Act is the quintessential 'Buy American, Hire American' law. It protects American jobs, sustains American shipyards, trains American mariners, and ensures that our armed forces will never depend on foreign vessels to defend our shores or supply our troops. Temporary waivers should remain precisely that: temporary. They must not become a mechanism for permanently undermining the legal framework upon which billions in private investment and hundreds of thousands of American livelihoods depend."

### Executive Order Denies Union Rights To More than 300,000 Civilian Workers

In mid-April, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth issued a directive to immediately terminate collective bargaining agreements across the Department of War. This move, instituted under Executive Order 14251, strips union rights from more than 300,000 civilian employees, including thousands of members of the SIU Government Services Division.

The SIU is working closely with the AFL-CIO and with other unions to formulate the best possible strategic response to this development.

The Union Veterans Council, part of the AFL-CIO, pointed out that nearly half of the workers who are losing their union representation are veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. Craig Romanovich, executive director of the council, stated, "This isn't about national security; it's a direct assault on the very people who have already sacrificed for this country. Secretary Hegseth is treating veteran workers like a line-item expense to be cut rather than the backbone of our national defense. By ripping up these contracts, the administration is stripping veterans of the workplace protections, fair pay, and safety standards they earned through years of service both in and out of uniform."

# Annual Funding Notice For Seafarers Pension Plan

## Introduction

This notice provides key details about your multiemployer pension plan (the "Plan") for the plan year beginning January 1, 2025 and ending December 31, 2025 ("Plan Year").

**This is an informational notice. You do not need to respond or take any action.**

This notice includes:

- Information about your Plan's funding status.
- Details on your benefit payments guaranteed by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), a federal insurance agency.

**What if I have questions about this notice, my Plan, or my benefits?**

Contact your plan administrator at:

- Margaret Bowen
- Phone: 301.899.0675
- Address: 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, MD 20746
- Email: map@seafarers.org

**To better assist you, provide your plan administrator with the following information when you contact them:**

- Plan Number: 001
- Plan Sponsor Name: Seafarers Pension Plan
- Employer Identification Number: 13-6100329

**1) What if I have questions about PBGC and the pension insurance program guarantees?**

Visit [www.pbgc.gov/prac/multiemployer](http://www.pbgc.gov/prac/multiemployer) for more information. For specific information about your pension plan or pension benefits, you should contact your employer or plan administrator as PBGC does not have that information.

Federal law requires all traditional pension plans, also known as defined benefit pension plans, to provide this notice every year regardless of funding status. This notice does not mean your Plan is terminating.

**2) How Well Funded Is Your Plan?**

The law requires the Plan's administrator to explain how well the Plan is funded, using a measure called the "funded percentage." The funded percentage is calculated by dividing Plan assets by Plan liabilities. In general, the higher the percentage, the better funded the plan. The chart below shows the Plan's funded percentage for the Plan Year and the two preceding plan years. It also lists the value of the Plan's assets and liabilities for those years.

	Funded Percentage		
	2025	2024	2023
Valuation Date	January 1, 2025	January 1, 2024	January 1, 2023
Funded Percentage	157.3%	148.3%	145.3%
Value of Assets	\$2,055,130,353	\$1,897,203,157	\$1,783,210,942
Value of Liabilities	\$1,306,226,414	\$1,279,272,778	\$1,227,605,684

**3) Year-End Fair Market Value of Assets**

To provide further insight into the Plan's financial position, the chart below shows the fair market value of the Plan's assets on the last day of the Plan Year and each of the two preceding plan years. **Market values** fluctuate based on investment performance, providing a more immediate snapshot of the plan's funding status.

	December 31, 2025	December 31, 2024	December 31, 2023
Fair Market Value of Assets	\$2,229,585,564	\$2,055,130,353	\$1,897,203,157

**4) Endangered, Critical, or Critical and Declining Status**

Under federal pension law, a plan's funding status determines the steps a plan must take to strengthen its finances and continue paying benefits:

- **Endangered:** The plan's funded percentage drops below 80 percent. The plan's trustees must adopt a funding improvement plan.
- **Critical:** The plan's funded percentage falls below 65 percent or meets other financial distress criteria. The plan's trustees must implement a rehabilitation plan.
- **Critical and Declining:** A plan in critical status is also designated as critical and declining if projected to become insolvent—meaning it will no longer have enough assets to pay out benefits—within 15 years (or within 20 years under a special rule). The plan's trustees must continue to implement the rehabilitation plan. The plan's sponsor may seek approval to amend the plan, including reducing current and future benefits.

The Plan was not in endangered, critical, or critical and declining status in the Plan Year.

If the Plan is in endangered, critical, or critical and declining status for the plan year ending December 31, 2026, a separate notification of that status has or will be provided.

**5) Participant and Beneficiary Information**

The following chart shows the number of participants and beneficiaries covered by the Plan on the last day of the Plan Year and the two preceding plan years. The numbers for the latest Plan Year reflect the plan administrator's reasonable, good faith estimate.

Number of participants and beneficiaries on last day of relevant plan year	2025	2024	2023
1. Last day of plan year	31-Dec	31-Dec	31-Dec
2. Participants currently employed	7,469	7,295	7,182
3. Participants and beneficiaries receiving benefits	5,859	6,018	5,281
4. Participants and beneficiaries entitled to future benefits (but not receiving benefits)	4,532	4,392	4,027
5. Total number of covered participants and beneficiaries (Lines 2 + 3 + 4 = 5)	17,860	17,705	16,490

The above table reflects actual year-end demographic data for the preceding two plan years.

**6) Funding & Investment Policies**

**Funding Policy**

Every pension plan must establish a funding policy to meet its objectives. The funding policy relates to how much money is needed to pay promised benefits. The Plan's funding policy to provide benefits from contributions by signatory employers under the terms of collective bargaining agreements between the Seafarers International Union of North America, Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters and the employers. The Plan may receive the portion of the employers' contributions made to the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan which the Trustees determine is necessary to provide for pension benefits based on the recommendation of the Plan's Actuary.

**Investment Policy**

Pension plans also have investment policies that provide guidelines for making investment management decisions. The Plan's investment policy is as follows:

**Investment objectives:**

Assets of the Plan shall be invested with sufficient diversification so as to minimize the risk of large losses unless it is clearly prudent under the then current circumstances not to do so. Plan assets shall be invested in a manner consistent with the fiduciary standards of ERISA and supporting regulations, and all transactions will be undertaken on behalf of the Plan in the sole interest of Plan participants and beneficiaries. Assets of the Plan shall be invested to maintain sufficient liquidity to meet benefit payment obligations and other Plan expenses.

**Investment Guidelines:**

With respect to any Investment Manager who is appointed by the Trustees, the Investment Manager is a bank (trust company), insurance company, or registered investment advisor under the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Full discretion, within certain guidelines, is granted to each Investment Manager with regard to the sector and security selection and the timing of any transactions.

**Asset Allocation:**

The Fund's assets are invested in the following asset classes and maintained within the corresponding ranges. The Trustees make appropriate adjustments if one or more of the limits are breached.

Asset Class	Target	Range
Domestic Equities	50%	40% - 60%
Fixed Income and Cash Equivalents	40%	30% - 50%
Real Estate	10%	0% - 20%

**Standards of Investment Performance:**

Each Investment Manager is reviewed regularly regarding performance, personnel, strategy, research capabilities, organizational and business matters and other qualitative factors that may affect its ability to achieve the desired investment results. Consideration will be given to the extent to which performance results are consistent with the goals and objectives set forth in the Investment Policy and/or individual guidelines provided to an Investment Manager. The Plan's investment policy outlines prohibited investments as well as limits regarding the percentage of the fund that may be invested in any one company and industry. Minimum credit quality guidelines are established and provided to investment managers. No investment may be made which violates the provisions of ERISA or the Internal Revenue Code.

The Trustees review the Plan's investment policy on a regular basis and make periodic changes when, based on all available information, it is prudent to do so.

As of the end of the Plan Year, the Plan's assets were allocated among the following investment categories as percentages of total assets:

Asset Allocations	Percentage
1. Cash (interest-bearing and non-interest bearing)	
2. U.S. Government securities	15
3. Corporate debt instruments (other than employer securities):	
a. Preferred	3
b. All other	
4. Corporate stocks (other than employer securities):	
a. Preferred	
b. Common	28
5. Partnership/joint venture interests	
6. Real estate (other than employer real property)	1
7. Loans (other than to participants)	
8. Participant loans	
9. Value of interest in common and collective trusts	41
10. Value of interest in pooled separate accounts	
11. Value of interest in master trust investment accounts	
12. Value of interest in 103-12 investment entities	
13. Value of interest in registered investment companies, like mutual funds	12
14. Value of funds held in insurance company general account (unallocated contracts)	
15. Employer-related investments:	
a. Employer Securities	
b. Employer real property	
16. Buildings and other property used in plan operation	
17. Other	

For information about the Plan's investment in any of the following types of investments common-/collective trusts, pooled separate accounts, or 103-12 investment entities - contact Margaret Bowen, Plan Administrator, at 301-899-0675, or by writing to: SPP Plan Administrator, 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, Maryland 20746.

The average return on assets for the Plan Year was 12.3%.

**7) Events Having a Material Effect on Assets or Liabilities**

By law, this notice must include an explanation of any new events that materially affect the Plan's liabilities or assets. These events could affect the Plan's financial health or its ability to meet its obligations.

For the plan year beginning on January 1, 2026 (i.e., the year after the notice year) and ending on December 31, 2026, there was no amendment, scheduled benefit increase or reduction, or other known event taking effect in the current plan year and expected to have a material effect on plan liabilities or assets for the current plan year.

**8) Right to Request a Copy of the Annual Report**

Pension plans must file an annual report, called the Form 5500, with the U.S. Department of Labor. The Form 5500 includes financial and other information about these pension plans. You can get a copy of your Plan's Form 5500:

- Online: Visit [www.efast.dol.gov](http://www.efast.dol.gov) to search for your Plan's Form 5500.
- By Mail: Submit a written request to your plan administrator.
- By Phone: Call (202) 693-8673 to speak with a representative of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration's Public Disclosure Room.

The Form 5500 does not include personal information, such as your accrued benefits. For details about your accrued benefits, contact your plan administrator.

**9) Summary of Rules Governing Insolvent Plans**

Federal law has a number of special rules that apply to financially troubled multiemployer plans that become insolvent, either as ongoing plans or plans terminated by mass withdrawal. The plan administrator is required by law to include a summary of these rules in the annual funding notice. A plan is insolvent for a plan year if its available financial resources are not sufficient to pay benefits when due for that plan year. An insolvent plan must reduce benefit payments to the highest level that can be paid from the plan's available resources.

*Continues on Page 20*

# At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



**TALKING MARITIME WITH CONGRESSMAN** – SIU VP Joe Vincenzo (second from left) represented the union at a maritime roundtable in Anchorage with U.S. Rep. Nick Begich (R-Alaska) (center) on March 31. Vincenzo discussed the gratifying maritime career opportunities available through the union and its affiliated Paul Hall Center. Other attendees included representatives from TOTE, Matson, JAG Marine, the Alaska Maritime Education Consortium, and the Transportation Institute.



**ABOARD CAPE TAYLOR** – Gathering on the TOTE ship are (from left) SIU Patrolman Kirk Pegan, Electrician Jimmie Williams, Wiper Abad Martinez, Bosun Christopher Johnson and SIU Asst. VP Joe Zavala.



**ABOARD ALASKAN LEGEND** – Bosun Donny Castillo (right) and SIU Patrolman Gordon Godel meet on the ATC ship.



**ADVANCING IN ALGONAC** – SA Ali Qasem (left) takes the next step in his SIU journey by securing his B book. He's pictured at the hiring hall with Safety Director Jason Brown.



**MARITIME BACKER** – SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook (right) chats with U.S. Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-Louisiana) at a reception in New Orleans earlier this year. The senator is a vocal supporter of the Jones Act, the Maritime Security Program, and the Tanker Security Program. Westbrook thanked him for his continued backing.



**CRESCENT BOATMEN HONORED** – Congrats to the SIU boatmen from Crescent Towing's vessel *Ned Ferry* on earning the company's 2025 boat of the year award. Pictured from left are Deckhand Mason Shaw, Wheelman Daniel Iorio, Captain Randy Donahue, Captain Nolte Lincks, Engineer Keith Lowe, Wheelman Roy Trosclair, and Deckhand Danny Patton. Engineer William Wolfe is part of the crew but is not in the photo.



**WELCOME ABOARD IN VIRGINIA** – STOS Emir Quinones (left) receives his B book. He's pictured at the Norfolk hall with SIU Port Agent Josh Rawls.



**ABOARD CAPE CORTES** – Pictured from left on the Intrepid ship are Chief Steward Perry Martin, SIU Port Agent Jimmy White, and Recertified Bosun Dave Coleman.



# At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



**ABOARD ARC INTEGRITY** – From left in the Seafaring Selfie on the TOTE vessel are Chief Cook Mario Botelho, SA Rashona McGilberry, Recertified Steward Marlon Battad, and SIU Patrolman Anthony Jacobson. In the remaining photos are STOSs Jeanette Kaldawi (above, left) and Daniel Jones.

**MILESTONE IN SAN JUAN** – Chief Cook Esperanza Crespo (left) receives her A-seniority book. She's pictured at the hiring hall with her brother, SIU Asst. VP Amancio Crespo.



**NEW ACHIEVEMENT UNLOCKED** – AB Joe Franta (left) receives his A-seniority book. He's pictured at the Jersey City hall with SIU Asst. VP Ray Henderson.

**SOLIDARITY IN LOUISIANA** – SIU Asst. VP Chris Westbrook (center) has been re-elected to the Louisiana AFL-CIO Executive Board. The federation conducted its annual convention March 2-3 in Baton Rouge. Pictured with Westbrook are the newly elected president, Matt Wood (left), and Secretary-Treasurer Shane Spillman.

**OATHS TAKEN IN JACKSONVILLE** – Pictured from left at the hiring hall are SIU Port Agent Ashley Nelson, OS Viktor Solymosi, SIU VP Dean Corgey, AB Reshawn Latimer, and GUDE Joses Torno. The Seafarers received their respective B books during the April membership meeting.



**FULL BOOKS IN HOUSTON** – Obtaining their respective B books at the hiring hall are SA Fredy Ruiz (left in photo above, left, with SIU Port Agent J.B. Niday) and AB Nicholas Heisler (left in remaining photo, with SIU Patrolman Anthony Jacobson).

**CATCHING UP IN GUAM** – As seen at the hall, from left: AB William McIntyre, SIU Port Agent Duane Akers, and Bosun Chris Dionio. McIntyre and Dionio were classmates in Class 603 in Piney Point.



**ABOARD CAPT. DAVID LYON** – OMs Nathan Bryant (left) and Tomas Faller focus on the task at hand aboard the Sealift vessel.

**WELCOME ASHORE IN LAUDERDALE** – Chief Steward Lem Robinson (left), who sailed with the SIU from 2000 to this year, picks up his first pension check at the hiring hall. Congratulating him is SIU Asst. VP Kris Hopkins.

**ABOARD MATSON KODIAK** – AB Andre Irby shows where the Seafarers LOG ranks on his list of favorite periodicals.

# At Sea & Ashore with the SIU



**WELCOME ASHORE IN HOUSTON** – Longtime G&H Towing boatman Michael Prejean (second from left) is pictured at the hiring hall along with his wife, Lillian, and (far left) Patrolmen Kirk Pegan and (far right) Anthony Jacobson.

**SAFETY AWARDS EARNED** – The Seafarers-crewed *Matsonia* has won Matson's annual vessel safety award, in recognition of incident-free operations, crew compliance, and adherence to safety protocols. A ceremony took place aboard the ship April 20 in Honolulu. Additionally, SIU Recertified Steward Nee Tran won the company's newly established Safe Mariner of the Year Award. He's pictured with vessel master Capt. Gerald Anderson in the two-person photo. From left in the other pic: SIU VP Hazel Galbiso, ACU Saeed Alasfor, SREC Nee Tran, Chief Cook Andy Campollo, Safety Director Amber Akana.



**BOOKS OBTAINED IN ALABAMA** – GUDE Patrick Cannon (left) and AB Chris Kelly (right) receive their respective full books. They're pictured at the Mobile hall with SIU Port Agent Jimmy White.



**ABOARD PRESIDENT REAGAN** – Pictured from left aboard the APL ship are ACU Frank Iverson, Steward/Baker Rommel Reston, Chief Cook Benny Feria, SIU Patrolman Gordon Godel, and SA Saleh Al-Olofi.



**PROMOTING WORKERS' RIGHTS** – SIU VP Sam Spain (right) meets with U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Virginia) at a recent gathering of the Eastern Virginia Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, in Norfolk.



**CONGRATS IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST** – QE2 Saddam Yahia (left) receives his A-seniority book. He's pictured at the Tacoma hall with SIU Patrolman Dennison Forsman.



**WELCOME ASHORE (x3) IN TACOMA** – Three Seafarers who sailed with the union for (combined) nearly a century recently picked up their respective first pension checks at the hiring hall. QEP Christopher Kirchofer (right in photo above, center) sailed with the SIU for almost 50 years, while AB Abdulsalam Ahmed (left in photo above, left) and SA Kassem Saleh (left in remaining photo) each spent around a quarter-century with the union. Congratulating them in each photo is SIU Port Agent Danielle Woodward.



**ON THE RECRUITING TRAIL** – The union and its affiliated Paul Hall Center remain quite active in promoting the industry. In photo above, center, SIU Patrolwoman Nirel Escalante works a union event in Brooklyn. Pictured at separate events earlier this year in Texas are (above, right) Patrolman Anthony Jacobson and Port Agent J.B. Niday, and (remaining photo) Safety Director Kevin Sykes.

# In Their Own Words: Seafarers Rising Through the Ranks

## Kevin Johnson

*Editor's note: This article is part of an occasional series featuring former SIU members who have risen through the ranks (or, in informal maritime industry terms, have gone up through the hawsepipe). Kevin Johnson graduated from the Paul Hall Center's apprentice program in 2003. He currently sails as a captain.*

**You were in your mid-twenties when you first went to Piney Point. How did you hear about the school, and was that your first experience with the maritime industry?**

My aunt's husband, **Tony Alston**, introduced me to the idea of going to sea because he himself was a member of the SIU as an AB. Yes, that was my first experience.

**What do you remember most about your time as an apprentice?**

I remember wondering what I had gotten myself into, from the lack of sleep to the PT to all the rules and regulations. At the time, I didn't realize it was turning me into not only a seaman but a better person overall.

I used the experience of being a little uncomfortable and just trusting the process to realize you can accomplish anything you put your mind to. Although it may be a little painful, just trusting the process is a life lesson that being an apprentice taught me, and that's a lesson I use every day.

**It looks as if you sailed with the SIU for almost 10 years, until early 2014. How was the overall experience, and what made you stick with it?**

It really expanded my horizons. As a kid from Portsmouth, Virginia, you really can't fathom how big the world is and how much it has to offer.



Recent snapshot of Kevin Johnson



Four SIU hawsepipers, from left: Capt. Kevin Johnson, 1AE Antoine Jennings, CE Ryan Neathery, 2AE Philander Walton

**When did you decide to pursue a license, and how difficult was it to move up the hawsepipe?**

Me and my classmates from Class 646 all had big dreams, and being away from society allows you to let those dreams take root. So, from the start of my career that was something to pursue. It was definitely challenging but doable.

**What are some of the main differences you've experienced sailing as an officer versus working in an unlicensed position? And is there anything you miss about the good old days?**

There is a lot more responsibility. All of a sudden, your decisions really matter not only for you but to the crew. It is now your responsibility to keep the ship and your crew safe. I miss being able to rely on someone else to make the decisions (hahaha).

**I realize shipboard internet is evolving, but, in your experience, how important is it to you and the crew?**

It's very important to the overall morale aboard the ship, but it also should be monitored to some degree, strictly for the safety of the ship.

**It seems as if one of the most commonly voiced concerns for people thinking about a maritime career is the time away from home. How have you made it work?**

Trial and error of your schedule and the needs that you have. Although you're away, you have the internet, so you can take care of business and check on your loved ones. I didn't have that luxury at the tips of my fingers when I first started, but now it's a lot easier. Also, your time off once you're off the vessel is something a lot of people don't get to experience – being off for months at a time kept me going.

**If you could change one or two things about the industry, what would they be?**

I'd like for us to (universally) be looked at as the fourth arm of defense. The U.S. Merchant Marine has always been there in support of our military and in any time of need, and we always will be. It would be nice to receive some perks that the military receives – for example, base access.

**What are some of the most enjoyable parts of your career?**

Seeing the world is truly a highlight, and while I definitely love the job, I appreciate the time off.

**What was one of your most memorable voyages, and what made it so?**

My very first ship was the *Strong Virginian*, which was a heavy lift ship. We hit every time zone, which literally represents you sailing around the world!

**As you undoubtedly know, this industry sometimes feels like an unintentionally well-kept secret. What's something you wish more people knew about American maritime?**

I wish more people knew about the great career opportunities in maritime. It should be introduced in high schools.

**What are your thoughts about the SIU?**

I have nothing but great things to say about the SIU. The union made me who I am today.

**What advice would you give to someone who is considering a maritime career?**

I would emphasize the flexibility. This is the only career I know of that offers so much time off. You could start your own business with months off at a time. It's a great opportunity.

**In that same spirit, what would you say to someone who's already sailing and is thinking about moving up the hawsepipe?**

Do it! Make the most out of your opportunities. You won't regret it.



Johnson is standing at far right with his classmates in Piney Point, Maryland.



Capt. Kevin Johnson (front, kneeling) is pictured in February on the flight deck of the Seafarers-crewed *S/S Wright* (Ocean Duchess) with members of the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. The Marine Corps unit conducted a training exercise on the Ready Reserve Force ship for two weeks in Norfolk, Virginia.



Graduates and union officials gather for the traditional group photo in Piney Point, Maryland, immediately following the May membership meeting.

## Combined Recert Class Expresses Gratitude

### Bosuns, Stewards Encourage Apprentices to Embrace the Journey

A combined recertification class consisting of a total of 14 SIU members (eight bosuns and six stewards) recently celebrated the culmination of their schooling at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center in Piney Point, Maryland. The recerts shared highlights of their respective SIU journeys in personal speeches, which they presented during the monthly membership meeting May 4.

The course entailed two weeks of blended and department-specific training, meetings with instructors, union officials and staff, and other personnel from the Paul Hall Center, along with participation in the annual Maritime Congressional Sail-In, which took place April 22 in Washington, D.C.

Recertified members included Bosuns (BRECs) **Gerardo Arroyo, Raul Colon Matos, Theophilus "Theo" Essien, Antionne Kelly, Mohamed Mohamed, Anthony Pace, Derik Rye, and Scott Snodgrass**, along with Stewards (SRECs) **Jason Beckford, Pauline Crespo Guillen, Jose Norales, Jacob Parrilla, Dindo Reforsado, and John Stephens**.

Following are highlights from the graduation speeches in the order they occurred at the membership meeting.

#### Jacob Parilla

SREC Parilla has sailed with the SIU for 13 years, hailing from the port in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He expressed appreciation for the union, which he sees as a door-opener to the world of the maritime industry, saying, "I come from a second-generation SIU family. And I am very grateful for all that SIU has done for me, my brothers, sisters and now my wife and kids today."



He cited the importance of working hard, going the extra mile, and taking pride in his profession, which are the values that led to him earning recertification. Parilla urged the other members in attendance to support the union's voluntary political action fund, SPAD, and emphasized the importance of taking advantage of the "unlimited opportunity to achieve professional goals in the maritime industry" via the educational resources provided by the Paul Hall Center.

Before closing out his speech, he congratulated his fellow graduates while also thanking the school and union and sharing words of encouragement with trainees.

#### Gerardo Arroyo

BREC Arroyo, from Buena Park, California, has been an SIU member since 2013, but his journey as a merchant mariner began in 1999 in the Philippines. Before emigrating to the United States in 2011 to be with his family, he worked aboard several types of foreign-flagged vessels. Upon arrival, he worked in manufacturing but longed for



the marine life again, so he began earning his credentials. By 2013, Arroyo was a full-fledged union member.

Arroyo expressed his gratitude to the SIU for selecting him for the recertification class. "I truly appreciate the union's investment in my professional development. I feel more confident in my role and better equipped to handle new challenges," he said.

He encouraged apprentices to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded to them, learn from their instructors, ask questions, and master the art of teamwork (which is vital to being a merchant mariner).

Arroyo's participation in the Sail-In helped him to understand the importance of the maritime industry to the global economy and how it provides millions of jobs and ensures the delivery of goods needed for daily life. He made sure to thank union officials for the work they do behind the scenes to ensure that the maritime industry continues providing job opportunities, good pay, and benefits to Seafarers like him.

Arroyo also emphasized that he has enjoyed a far better experience sailing with a union contract on American-flag ships compared to his time working on foreign vessels for much less money with longer hours.

Lastly, he thanked his wife for "all the loving support she selflessly gave through the years," which has been a major contributing factor to his success.

#### Jason Beckford

SREC Beckford began his speech by thanking union officials along with the late SIU President Michael J. Sacco for the work he completed to secure the SIU's legacy during his lifetime. Beckford, who sails out of the Oakland hall in California, has been an SIU member for more than 16 years. He had a love for sailing prior to joining the union, as he sailed aboard foreign-flagged vessels, but now that he's with the SIU, he feels that he could never have chosen a better life.



Beckford encouraged trainees in the audience to show respect wherever they go, and it will take them far. He thanked his fellow recertification classmates for making the journey worth it, and acknowledged his family and the families of the other recerts, who are always out there waiting for them to come home safely from their travels. "We couldn't do it without them," he said. Although, he says, each graduate started from different places with different stories, Beckford is grateful to have completed this journey together with his classmates and looks forward to the future each of them is about to build.

#### Raul Colon Matos

BREC Colon Matos started his career moving from one day job to another, until he enrolled into the apprentice program at Piney Point in 2003. From there on, his life took a new direction. "This school gave me the tools I needed to succeed and become part of the great family of Seafarers International Union. That same year, I received my first

opportunity as an entry-level seaman," he said.

Since then, Colon Matos has traversed the world, visited many countries, and earned a great living for himself and his family, which he says is something he had never imagined before joining the SIU.



"The SIU truly represents American dreams for those willing to work hard and continue improving," said Colon Matos. He believes that the SIU continues to protect American jobs and support American workers in the mainland and Puerto Rico, even with the current challenges facing the U.S. Merchant Marine, such as the efforts to bypass the Jones Act.

"Being part of the SIU means job security, affordable healthcare, time off to spend with your family and a solid pension," Colon Matos said. "We must continue supporting our leadership and our goals for collective bargaining agreements that protect our members and their families. Together, we maintain a strong environment."

#### John Stephens

SREC Stephens began his speech with words of thanks to God and to his family for their encouragement and support. Joining the SIU opened doors for Stephens, who admits he previously "made a lot of bad choices and decisions in life, but this choice to join SIU was the best thing to ever happen to me."



After 28 years in the union, he is still here. "It ain't the bad decisions you make, it's how you rebound," he said. "I have my strength, my health, and the ability to support my family through this union. SIU gave me the chance to see the world and make a good living for my family."

Stephens gave credit to the union president, the vice presidents, and other officials for the work they do to ensure that members have job security and benefits. Although life at sea can be challenging and sometimes lonely, he encouraged the apprentices to stay focused and tune out negativity so that they achieve the life they've always dreamed of.

"The SIU isn't perfect, but our union leaders know what we're going through because they've also been there," said Stephens. "They are doing their best to make our work environment the best and most comfortable place for us to be, so I take my hat off to them."

#### Theophilus 'Theo' Essien

BREC Essien kept things brief, beginning his remarks with a thanks to his union representatives in Philadelphia, his teachers and the SIU administration, and his wife for all of her support. "It's been a great honor to be selected to be recertified. I'm really happy and grateful," said Essien.



Sixteen years ago, when he first walked through the doors of the Philadelphia hiring hall, he didn't know he would discover much more than just his next job opportunity. "What I found was more than just employment - I found a career, a community, and a family. Sixteen years at sea have taught me perseverance, teamwork, and the importance of dedication. The training and the mastery of these skills have shaped me to the person I am today," he said.

Essien recounted the time in his life when he worked three jobs to make ends meet, but since joining the SIU his fortunes have completely changed for the better. He encouraged the trainees who were listening to believe in themselves, and let them know they can also accomplish their goals in the union, just as he did.

#### Jose Norales

SREC Jose Norales expressed gratitude to the folks at his home port in Jacksonville, Florida. For 13 years before joining the SIU, he worked on a foreign vessel making very little money and working extremely long hours.

With the SIU, Norales has spent 26 years sailing aboard container ships, tankers, and more, and has travelled to many countries while earning good money to support his family. "Without this union I would not be in the good position I am in today," he said.

Norales encouraged apprentices to be respectful, heed the advice of more-seasoned Seafarers, and to check the contracts and read them for themselves when accepting jobs. He also extended his thanks to officials and staff who work behind the scenes to keep the union and its affiliated school strong.



#### Antionne Kelly

BREC Kelly didn't initially set out to be a bosun but was encouraged by a Bosun named Saul Suarez (now a pensioner) whom he met while sailing on his first rotary ship, the *Noble Star*. "He used to always tell me 'Papi, you're going to be a great bosun one day, and every time, my response was, 'No, I'm not. I'm going to the engine room,' he recalled. He credited Suarez and others (his coaches, teachers, family members, shipmates, mentors, and loved ones) who have guided him and supported him for helping shape him into the person he has become.

"Today I've done something that [Suarez] didn't have the opportunity to do, which is becoming a recertified bosun, so the day for me is kind of bitter-sweet, because he's not here. If he were here, I know he would be proud of me," said Kelly.

Attending the Sail-In helped Kelly understand more about how politics work in the union and the amount of effort it takes to help keep the industry afloat. The experience gave him an increased respect for what the officials do for the union, and he expressed his thanks for their dedicated years of service.

Kelly hopes to continue guiding Seafarers who are rising in the ranks just as other members helped him. "My duty is to be a leader and a mentor to the next generation. I understand, even as a relief, there's always somebody coming behind me, so I keep that in mind," he said.



#### Scott Snodgrass

BREC Snodgrass told the apprentices that 35 years ago, he sat in the same seats they were sitting in, attending his first union meeting. He shared that he remembers watching the recertification class back then and thought that someday he would achieve that milestone.

He spoke about the sacrifices that Seafarers often must make while being away from home and not being able to be present for milestones. For instance, recently, he heard from his mother that his father had



passed away when he was on a ship, out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

He encouraged the apprentices to be respectful and open to learning because they will learn as they go, and that no one expects them to know everything when they get on their first ship. "We're depending on you to keep this going. You've got the best leadership you could ask for and you're being given a golden opportunity to make a hell of a life for yourself," said Snodgrass.

He also extended appreciation to the union officials after learning more about the work they do behind the scenes. "I never knew how hard these guys worked. I thought it was like a regular office job," he said. "You think we work hard? My God, there's no way I could keep up with these guys on a daily basis."

#### Anthony Pace

"I stand before you today, with unquantifiable gratitude, to the Seafarers International Union for the good life the union has graced me and my family with," said BREC Pace. He thanked the officials, staff and instructors and his union brothers and sisters for all that they do to make the SIU the great union that it is. He urged those listening to donate to SPAD, which ensures that the voices of mariners are heard by lawmakers in Washington, D.C.

For 25 years, Pace has been a proud member of the SIU. He talked about his time working as a bosun on reduced-operating-status (ROS) ships on the East and West coasts, then congratulated his classmates. He also thanked his wife for her love and support.

Directly speaking to the apprentices, he said, "Please know that my pathway to a meaningful career was built through loyalty and perseverance, seasoned by time and camaraderie. But this is not a one man show; never has been and never will be. Our Brotherhood of the Sea is a unified body that we must all protect and uphold with immense pride and earnest respect."



#### Dindo Reforsado

SREC Reforsado conveyed his religious faith and then thanked SIU President David Heindel and other officials "for the work that they've done to make the union what it is today."

He continued, "Being in this program has reminded me that being a chief steward is more than just running the galley; it is about leadership, accountability and understanding the policies that guide us today. What stands out to me is the true importance of SIU. Our union is not just an organization, but our voice, our protection and foundation which allows us to do our jobs with dignity and security. It sets the standards we are expected to uphold, both professionally and personally. This training is not just about improving our skills; it's about honoring those standards and carrying it back on board through how we lead and take care of our crew."

Reforsado also extended his gratitude to his wife and kids for their unconditional love and support as well as those who work in the union hall in Wilmington, California, for their unwavering dedication. "Their continued assistance provides me with a profound sense of assurance every time I am at sea, knowing that should any needs or emergencies arise, my family and I can rely on their steadfast support," he said.



#### Derik Rye

BREC Rye is a planner and goal setter. "Research has shown that you are 42% more likely to achieve your goals when they are written down," he began. He explained that it becomes 76% more likely that you'll achieve your goals if you write down actions associated with them and share those with those closest to you with weekly progress reports.



Although he hasn't always been a planner, he takes that advice to heart when considering his future. "I had heard a quote one time that said, 'Your past is important, because it brought you to where you are. But as important as your past is, to your present, it's not half as important as the way you see your future,'" he said.

Rye reminisced about his days as an apprentice two and a half decades ago, watching then-President Mike Sacco lead the monthly membership meetings. "As I sat there and listened to him articulate what it means to be a part of the SIU, and what we, as trainees, bring for the future of this industry, I left that meeting with a seed planted, fertilized, with excitement and pride. I made it a point to be sure that every ship I sailed on, they would know that the Harry Lundberg School of Seamanship (part of the Paul Hall Center) sent out quality mariners," he said.

Rye concluded his remarks by encouraging apprentices to go out on their first ships one day with that same sense of pride.

#### Mohamed Mohamed

BREC Mohamed has been with the union for 20 years, but for him it did not start there; his family had been sailing for two generations prior. "I'm a third-generation member of the SIU. That means before I ever stepped on a ship, I already understood something about this life," he said. "I knew it was not easy. I knew it meant time away from home, missing holidays, and working long hours and conditions most people will never fully understand. But I also knew something else, nobody does it alone."

Mohamed recalled that he "saw what [the SIU] meant long before I joined it. I saw what the union provided: stability, opportunities, and a level of respect that workers had to fight to earn. That did not just happen; people before us built that for us. They stood together, they pushed back when they had to and they made sure the next generation had something better."

Mohamed takes the responsibility of constantly improving working conditions for future mariners seriously. He said that the same way a Seafarer depends on his or her crewmates to do their job right because your safety depends on it is the same way the union functions. "It only stays strong if we look out for each other and stay involved, and we do not take what we have for granted," he said.

He encouraged those listening to pay attention to the decisions that aren't made on ships that affect the livelihoods of Seafarers and to support political efforts like SPAD, which serves to protect work opportunities for current members and the generations that will follow.

He then urged the apprentices to take their time in the program seriously and to realize that they are part of the SIU's legacy and will be setting the example for the next group that comes to the school after them.



#### Pauline Crespo

SREC Crespo was born in Puerto Rico and grew up in Michigan. Before coming to Piney Point for the first time, she worked as an ESL high school teacher, court interpreter and was on TV. Although no one's path in life is without challenges, she encouraged the trainees and members in the audience to think about how far they've come by being a part of the SIU. "I don't want you to remember or to think about the past. You're here today. You're one of us. You made it," she said. "Always remember, everyone here, that God's grace is sufficient to succeed in life if you do the work."

Crespo thanked several people within the organization, starting with her brother, SIU Assistant Vice President Amancio Crespo. She also thanked her chef instructors for sharing valuable knowledge and passion for cooking, along with Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski, Vice President Gulf Coast Dean Corgy, Assistant Vice President Joe Zavala and Assistant Vice President Michael Russo for their guidance.

Lastly, she paid tribute to those who are no longer with us, including her mother; SIU Vice President Nicholas Celona; and SIU President Mike Sacco.



David Heindel, President

Augustin Tellez, Executive Vice President

Tom Orzechowski, Secretary-Treasurer

George Tricker, Vice President Contracts

Dean Corgey, Vice President Gulf Coast

Joe Vincenzo, Vice President West Coast

Joseph T. Soresi, Vice President Atlantic Coast

Sam Spain, Vice President Government Services

Bryan Powell,  
Vice President Lakes and Inland Waters

Pat Vandegrift, Vice President

Hazel Galbiso, Vice President



## HEADQUARTERS

5201 Capital Gateway Drive  
Camp Springs, MD 20746 (301) 899-0675

## ALGONAC

520 St. Clair River Dr., Algonac, MI 48001  
(810) 794-4988

## ANCHORAGE

721 Sesame St., #1C, Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 561-4988

## BALTIMORE

2315 Essex St., Baltimore, MD 21224  
(410) 327-4900

## GUAM

Cliffline Office Ctr. Bldg., Suite 103B  
422 West O'Brien Dr., Hagatna, Guam 96910  
(671) 477-1350

## HONOLULU

606 Kalihi St., Honolulu, HI 96819  
(808) 845-5222

## HOUSTON

625 N. York St., Houston, TX 77003  
(713) 659-5152

## JACKSONVILLE

5100 Belfort Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32256  
(904) 281-2622

## JERSEY CITY

104 Broadway, Jersey City, NJ 07306  
(201) 434-6000

## JOLIET

10 East Clinton St., Joliet, IL 60432  
(815) 723-8002

## MOBILE

1640 Dauphin Island Pkwy, Mobile, AL 36605  
(251) 478-0916

## NEW ORLEANS

3911 Lapalco Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058  
(504) 328-7545

## NORFOLK

115 Third Street, Norfolk, VA 23510  
(757) 622-1892

## OAKLAND

1121 7th St., Oakland, CA 94607  
(510) 444-2360

## PHILADELPHIA

2800 S. 20th Street, Building 12B, Suite A  
Philadelphia, PA 19145  
(215) 336-3818

## PINEY POINT

45353 St. George's Avenue, Piney Point, MD  
20674  
(301) 994-0010

## PORT EVERGLADES

1221 S. Andrews Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316  
(954) 522-7984

## SAN JUAN

659 Hill Side St., Summit Hills  
San Juan, PR 00920  
(787) 721-4033

## ST. LOUIS/ALTON

4581 Gravois Ave., St. Louis, MO 63116  
(314) 752-6500

## TACOMA

3411 South Union Ave., Tacoma, WA 98409  
(253) 272-7774

## WILMINGTON

510 N. Broad Ave., Wilmington, CA 90744  
(310) 549-4000

# Inquiring Seafarer

This month's question was answered by Seafarers and one apprentice at the Houston hall, immediately following the March membership meeting. In the apprentice's case, the question was modified accordingly.

**Question: How long have you been with the union, and what are some things you enjoy about your career?**



**Nicholas Smithling**  
Recertified Bosun

I've been with the union 23 years. What I've enjoyed about my career is the travel and, secondly, the financial security for my family and myself.



**Marshod Hawkins**  
Apprentice

I started the program Sept. 8, 2025, and just finished phase two. I had a great time on my ship (the *ARC Defender*). I'm looking to become an engineer. I want to become a help to the union and I'm looking forward to growing and learning.



**Toribio Valentin**  
Bosun

I've been with the union 24 or 25 years. It has helped me grow as a man. When I started, I was in my early twenties. This has helped my family, my livelihood. I'm now in a better situation.



**Kenneth Holly**  
AB

I've been with the union for about 25 years. I love the travel and also the wages. Something else I appreciate is the freedom to be home a lot.



**Anthony Newbill**  
Bosun

I've been with the union for 19 years. I enjoy it – it brought me a long way, from not having anything to having something. It helped with buying a home. Also, the travel – you can't beat the traveling.



**Abel Reyna**  
Chief Cook

Fifteen years or so. I've been to a lot of places and have enjoyed meeting people, my co-workers. They've been very gracious. I've been able to support my family because the money is great. But it's about the people, and this is a great place to work.

## Pic from the Past



This snapshot from 2006, taken in New Orleans aboard the *Cape Vincent*, shows a few of the Seafarers who were honored by the Maritime Administration for their relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina. Pictured from left are ABs Brian Jones, Thames Solomon and Anthony Smith, Bosun Darryl Sutton and Capt. David Scott. Seafarers from the *Cape Victory* and the *Empire State* also were recognized for their work following Hurricane Rita and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Altogether, more than 500 SIU members sailed in the relief missions, aboard no fewer than 14 ships.

## SIU Pushes for Tax Relief

The SIU once again has teamed up with more than 20 other labor organizations in urging legislators to support a bill aimed at providing tax relief for mariners and millions of other workers across the country.

In an April 16 letter to Congress, the organizations asked for support of the No Tax on Overtime for All Workers Act (H.R. 5475/S. 4310). Full text of the letter follows:

On behalf of millions of workers across the country, we are writing in strong support of the No Tax on Overtime for All Workers Act (H.R. 5475/S. 4310) and to encourage you to cosponsor this legislation. This bill would ensure that all similarly situated workers nationwide qualify for tax relief under the recently established tax deduction for overtime earnings. This expansion will provide immediate tax relief to millions of additional workers across the nation.

The tax code currently allows most hourly workers to deduct up to \$25,000 of qualified overtime compensation from their annual income (26 USC § 225). This benefit represents as much as \$6,000 in tax savings per year for working families – a massive savings for workers who put in the long hours necessary to earn it. However, the tax code uses a limited definition of overtime from the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (FLSA). This definition includes a series of exemptions and limitations that prevent millions of Americans who would otherwise qualify for this benefit from accessing it.

FLSA's definition of overtime excludes nearly all transportation workers. Airline, rail, trucking, maritime, and other workers cannot write off their overtime earnings solely because of their employer and job duties. Additionally, the FLSA requires fire fighters, law enforcement officers, and hospital workers to work far beyond 40 hours per week, the typical overtime threshold for most workers, before they can begin earning qualified overtime compensation. While all of these workers may earn overtime wages under state law or through collective bargaining agreements, this compensation does not currently qualify for the overtime income tax deduction.

The bipartisan No Tax on Overtime for All Workers Act expands the definition of overtime for purposes of the overtime income tax deduction to ensure all similarly situated workers qualify for this benefit. This legislation would implement a fair, working-class tax cut that rewards Americans for their long hours on the job. We urge you to cosponsor H.R. 5475/S. 4310 to recognize the work performed by all similarly situated workers and ensure they can keep more of their hard-earned wages.

## June & July Membership Meetings

Piney Point	Monday: June 8, July 6
Algonac	Thursday: June 18, July 16
Baltimore	Thursday: June 11, July 9
Guam	Thursday: June 25, July 23
Honolulu	Monday: June 22, Friday: July 17
Houston	Monday: June 15, July 13
Jacksonville	Thursday: June 11, July 9
Joliet	Thursday: June 18, July 16
Mobile	Wednesday: June 17, July 15
New Orleans	Tuesday: June 16, July 14
Jersey City	Tuesday: June 9, July 7
Norfolk	Friday: June 12, July 10
Oakland	Thursday: June 18, July 16
Philadelphia	Wednesday: June 10, July 8
Port Everglades	Thursday: June 18, July 16
San Juan	Thursday: June 11, July 9
St. Louis	Monday: June 22, Friday: July 17
Tacoma	Friday: June 26, July 24
Wilmington	Monday: June 22, July 20

Meeting date changes due to holidays

Each port's meeting starts at 10:30 a.m.

## Dispatchers' Report for Deep Sea

"Total Registered" and "Total Shipped" data is cumulative from April 10, 2026 - May 11 2026.  
"Registered on the Beach" data is as of May 11, 2026.

Port	Total Registered All Groups			Total Shipped All Groups			Trip Reliefs	Registered on Beach All Groups		
	A	B	C	A	B	C		A	B	C
<b>Deck Department</b>										
Algonac	9	7	2	8	6	0	4	20	13	4
Anchorage	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	5	1	0
Baltimore	3	4	3	2	1	0	0	5	7	3
Fort Lauderdale	20	17	1	13	5	3	4	25	21	4
Guam	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	3	2	0
Harvey	8	4	1	4	3	2	4	11	5	9
Honolulu	6	0	0	2	1	0	1	8	3	2
Houston	30	14	6	20	12	7	9	66	25	14
Jacksonville	23	27	4	14	22	7	15	53	42	13
Jersey City	17	8	5	8	9	3	9	36	9	3
Joliet	1	4	1	1	3	0	0	0	5	2
Mobile	5	5	4	10	1	2	3	7	12	6
Norfolk	26	12	12	12	7	4	8	39	16	14
Oakland	6	1	2	5	3	1	2	8	3	2
Philadelphia	3	3	2	4	3	0	1	4	3	2
Piney Point	4	4	0	2	3	0	2	2	3	0
Puerto Rico	2	3	4	4	4	2	2	6	4	2
St. Louis	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
Tacoma	11	7	3	19	7	1	18	22	8	4
Wilmington	22	14	5	22	11	3	13	57	20	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Engine Department</b>										
Algonac	4	1	0	2	2	0	2	5	2	0
Anchorage	1	3	0	1	2	0	1	1	1	0
Baltimore	2	4	0	1	2	1	1	4	3	1
Fort Lauderdale	10	6	3	3	5	1	1	14	9	1
Guam	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	1
Harvey	0	1	0	1	3	1	2	4	2	0
Honolulu	3	1	1	2	2	0	2	7	2	2
Houston	8	7	2	5	9	1	8	10	10	6
Jacksonville	19	19	5	12	11	3	7	43	26	5
Jersey City	5	2	1	3	3	2	3	8	4	1
Joliet	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Mobile	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	4	2	3
Norfolk	17	8	8	13	13	2	7	19	11	11
Oakland	1	1	0	3	1	0	1	1	2	4
Philadelphia	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
Piney Point	2	2	0	1	3	0	0	3	3	0
Puerto Rico	4	1	0	0	2	0	1	8	1	0
St. Louis	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	0
Tacoma	4	3	1	5	2	0	1	11	3	2
Wilmington	6	6	2	11	5	1	4	14	7	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Steward Department</b>										
Algonac	0	2	1	3	1	0	0	1	2	1
Anchorage	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	0
Baltimore	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Fort Lauderdale	10	5	2	4	2	0	2	10	8	2
Guam	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	4	1	0
Harvey	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	0
Honolulu	9	0	0	5	0	0	1	10	2	1
Houston	12	4	3	8	6	2	4	14	15	4
Jacksonville	27	14	2	17	17	0	12	33	23	3
Jersey City	11	7	0	6	6	0	4	17	9	1
Joliet	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0
Mobile	1	5	0	3	1	0	3	4	3	0
Norfolk	12	10	2	8	4	2	4	19	17	3
Oakland	7	4	0	5	1	1	1	13	6	0
Philadelphia	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	2	3	1
Piney Point	1	2	1	1	3	0	2	7	1	1
Puerto Rico	2	3	0	2	2	1	2	6	5	1
St. Louis	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
Tacoma	4	1	1	5	1	0	4	8	5	1
Wilmington	27	6	1	15	2	3	10	38	10	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Entry Department</b>										
Algonac	1	7	15	0	2	4	5	2	8	23
Anchorage	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Baltimore	0	3	0	0	3	0	1	0	4	0
Fort Lauderdale	0	3	2	0	3	2	0	3	8	5
Guam	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Harvey	0	3	2	0	0	2	0	0	4	2
Honolulu	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	2	3
Houston	0	20	7	2	12	4	3	0	29	20
Jacksonville	1	38	34	2	17	9	4	1	47	66
Jersey City	1	10	8	1	8	6	3	0	25	11
Joliet	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
Mobile	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Norfolk	0	17	18	1	11	19	5	0	15	39
Oakland	0	4	10	0	3	7	0	0	10	14
Philadelphia	0	0	4	0	1	2	0	0	0	5
Piney Point	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Puerto Rico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
St. Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tacoma	2	2	7	1	3	0	2	4	5	10
Wilmington	0	6	19	1	4	14	3	0	16	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>394</b>

# Welcome Ashore!

We pay tribute to our brothers and sisters of the SIU who have recently retired. THANK YOU for a job well done and we wish you fair winds and following seas.

## DEEP SEA

### COLLINS AGYEMANG

Brother Collins Agyemang, 71, joined the union in 1994, initially sailing aboard the *USNS Bellatrix*. He worked in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Agyemang most recently shipped on the *Overseas Chinook* and lives in Richmond, Texas.



### JOSEPH BARNES

Brother Joseph Barnes, 65, started sailing with the SIU in 2002 and first worked on the *Dodge Island*. He shipped in all three departments and upgraded at the Piney Point school on numerous occasions. Brother Barnes concluded his career aboard the *Global Sentinel*. He resides in Keaau, Hawaii.



### ALEXANDER CALIMER

Brother Alexander Calimer, 65, became a member of the union in 1978 when he sailed aboard the *Ponce*. He sailed in the engine department. Brother Calimer upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He concluded his career working aboard the *Cape Juby* and makes his home in St. Petersburg, Florida.



### CARLOS DIAZ

Brother Carlos Diaz, 65, joined the Seafarers International Union in 1997 and first sailed aboard the *Cape Mendocino*. He sailed in the steward department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Diaz most recently sailed aboard the *American Freedom* and settled in Jacksonville, Florida.



### DONALD DWYER

Brother Donald Dwyer, 70, embarked on his career with the SIU in 1991 when he sailed on the *Independence*. He shipped in the steward department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Dwyer concluded his career aboard the *Moku Pahu* and makes his home in Las Vegas.



### ARTHUR GRAIFER

Brother Arthur Graifer, 66, signed on with the union in 1978. He initially sailed aboard the *Mt. Vernon Victory* and worked in the engine department. Brother Graifer last shipped on the *Long Lines*. He is a resident of Wilmington, North Carolina.

### ALBERT HAARMANN

Brother Albert Haarmann, 65, started sailing with the SIU in 1990 when he shipped on the *Del Valle*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Haarmann concluded his career aboard the *Quality* and settled in Dallas.



### MICHAEL HARTUNG

Brother Michael Hartung, 70, began his career with the Seafarers International Union in 1978. An engine department member, he first sailed aboard the *Bayamon*. Brother Hartung upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He last shipped on the *Pacific* and is a resident of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

### CHARLES HILL

Brother Charles Hill, 69, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1990 and first worked aboard the *Patriot*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded his skills at the Piney Point school on several occasions. Brother Hill concluded his career on the *American Phoenix*. He makes his home in Houston.



### RUBY JONES

Sister Ruby Jones, 68, began sailing with the Seafarers in 2016. She was a deck department member and first worked on the *Pride of America*. Sister Jones upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. She most recently sailed on the *Green Delta* and lives in Anchorage, Alaska.



### THOMAS KINGSBURY

Brother Thomas Kingsbury, 65, joined the union in 2002 and first sailed aboard the *USNS Invincible*. He was a member of the steward department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Kingsbury last shipped with TOTE Services. He resides in Clio, Michigan.



### JAMES KINGSLEY

Brother James Kingsley, 65, donned the SIU colors in 2005 when he sailed aboard the *Independence*. He upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center and worked in the steward department. Brother Kingsley concluded his career aboard the *St. Louis Express*. He resides in Tiverton, Rhode Island.



### ZELJKO KRIZAN

Brother Zeljko Krizan, 66, became an SIU member in 2011. He was an engine department member and upgraded at the Piney Point school in 2013. Brother Krizan's first vessel was the *Burns Harbor*; his last, the *Defender*. He makes his home in Seattle.



### RAMON LIRAG

Brother Ramon Lirag, 67, started sailing with the union in 1989, initially working aboard the *Independence*. He sailed in the engine department and upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Lirag concluded his career aboard the *Pride of America*. He lives in Honolulu.



### ARTHUR MARSHALL

Brother Arthur Marshall, 66, joined the union in 1983. He first shipped on the *Boston* and sailed in the engine department. Brother Marshall upgraded at the Piney Point school on numerous occasions and most recently sailed on the *Cape Wrath*. He is a Baltimore resident.



### ROBBY MCBRIDE

Brother Robby McBride, 68, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 2003. He first sailed aboard the *Atlantic Forest* and worked in the deck department. Brother McBride upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He last sailed aboard the *Florida* and makes his home in Ocala, Florida.



### DAVE MCGATH

Brother Dave McGath, 70, signed on with the SIU in 1970 when he sailed on the *Detroit Edison*. He shipped in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother McGath's final vessel was the *Cape Diamond*. He resides in Jacksonville, Florida.



### MICHAEL MCGLONE

Brother Michael McGlone, 55, began sailing with the Seafarers in 1992. An engine department member, he first sailed aboard the *Long Lines*. Brother McGlone upgraded often at the Paul Hall Center. He most recently sailed aboard the *Midnight Sun* and lives in Puyallup, Washington.



### FREDY MELENDEZ

Brother Fredy Melendez, 65, donned the SIU colors in 2002. He worked as a steward department member, initially aboard the *USNS Stockham*. Brother Melendez upgraded at the Piney Point school in 2006. He last shipped aboard the *Energy Enterprise* and settled in Miami.



### SALEH MOHAMED

Brother Saleh Mohamed, 65, started sailing with the union in 1991, initially working aboard the *Independence*. He sailed in both the steward and engine departments and also worked on shore gangs. Brother Mohamed last worked with American Service Technology Inc. and makes his home in Coldwater, Michigan.



### WILLIAM RIGGS

Brother William Riggs, 65, joined the SIU in 2004 and first shipped on the *Wilson*. He worked in the deck department and upgraded on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Brother Riggs last shipped on the *Houston* and is a Houston resident.

# Welcome Ashore!

We pay tribute to our brothers and sisters of the SIU who have recently retired. THANK YOU for a job well done and we wish you fair winds and following seas.

## JOHN SCHMANSKI

Brother John Schmanski, 66, embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1978. He first sailed aboard the *Resource* and worked in the deck department. Brother Schmanski upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and concluded his career aboard the *Pride of America*. He lives in Alpena, Michigan.



## ROSALIND SPARROW

Sister Rosalind Sparrow, 65, became a member of the union in 2009. She worked in the deck department and upgraded on several occasions at the Paul Hall Center. Sister Sparrow's first vessel was the *Black Eagle*; her last, the *Matej Kocak*. She resides in Virginia Beach, Virginia.



## REYNALDO TINAY

Brother Reynaldo Tinay, 65, joined the Seafarers International Union in 2007 and first sailed aboard the *Cleveland*. He upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions and worked in the deck department. Brother Tinay concluded his career aboard the *Bernard Fisher*. He makes his home in McAllen, Texas.



## LISA WERT

Sister Lisa Wert, 65, donned the SIU colors in 2017. She first sailed aboard the *Matson Tacoma* and was a steward department member. Sister Wert upgraded her skills at the Paul Hall Center in 2022 and last shipped aboard the *Pacific Tracker*. She lives in Ogden, Utah.

## ROSSITZA ZAHARIEV

Sister Rossitza Zahariev, 65, signed on with the union in 2014 and initially sailed aboard the *Steven L. Bennett*. She worked in the deck department and upgraded on numerous occasions at the Piney Point school. Sister Zahariev most recently shipped on the *Liberty Peace*. She resides in Varna, Bulgaria.



## SLAVI ZAHARIEV

Brother Slavi Zahariev, 65, started sailing with the SIU in 2005 when he shipped on the *Green Dale*. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. Brother Zahariev concluded his career aboard the *Overseas Nikiski*. He makes his home in Varna, Bulgaria.



## GREAT LAKES

### PHILIP COUILLARD

Brother Philip Couillard, 65, signed on with the SIU in 1992. He first sailed aboard the *Alpena* and worked in the engine department. Brother Couillard last shipped on the *E.M. Ford*. He is a resident of Onaway, Michigan.

## MICHAEL DECAIRE

Brother Michael DeCaire, 65, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 2002 when he shipped on the *St. Clair*. He worked primarily in the engine department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother DeCaire last shipped on the *Buffalo*. He resides in Lachine, Michigan.



## INLAND

### MARK CHRISTIANSEN

Brother Mark Christiansen, 69, donned the SIU colors in 1975. He was a deck department member and first worked aboard the *Independence*. Brother Christiansen upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He concluded his career with McAllister Towing of Philadelphia and settled in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania.



### PETER ENDRES

Brother Peter Endres, 64, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1996. He shipped in the deck department and was employed by Crowley for the duration of his career. Brother Endres makes his home in York, Pennsylvania.

### DEAN EVERTON

Brother Dean Everton, 67, joined the SIU in 1980 when he worked with Dixie Carriers. Brother Everton sailed in the deck department. He concluded his career with Virginia Pilot Corporation and settled in Norfolk, Virginia.

### EDWARD GARNER

Brother Edward Garner, 60, signed on with the union in 2003. He sailed in the deck department and upgraded often at the Piney Point school. Brother Garner was employed with Express Marine for the duration of his career. He resides in Knotts Island, North Carolina.



### THOMMIE HAMPTON

Brother Thommie Hampton, 62, donned the SIU colors in 1984. He initially shipped on the *Comanche* and worked in both the deck and engine departments. Brother Hampton upgraded at the Paul Hall Center on numerous occasions. He concluded his career with Crowley and settled in Philadelphia.



### ARNOLD LEONARD

Brother Arnold Leonard, 68, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 2008, initially working with Seabulk. He shipped in both the deck and engine departments and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Leonard was most recently employed with Bay Towing and makes his home in Warren, Texas.



## MICHAEL LIMON

Brother Michael Limon, 62, joined the SIU in 2005. Sailing in both the deck and engine departments, Brother Limon worked with Starlight Marine Services for the duration of his career. He resides in Arroyo Grande, California.

## CHARLES ORR

Brother Charles Orr, 64, signed on with the union in 1992. Working in the deck department, he sailed with G&H Towing for his entire career. Brother Orr makes his home in Fort Worth, Texas.



## RUBEN ORTIZ

Brother Ruben Ortiz, 66, signed on with the union in 1993. He initially worked with Allied Transportation and sailed in the engine department. Brother Ortiz upgraded his skills on multiple occasions at the Paul Hall Center. He was last employed by Crowley Puerto Rico Services and calls St. Johns, Florida, home.



## RICKY REID

Brother Ricky Reid, 67, became a member of the union in 2012, initially shipping aboard the *Legacy*. Brother Reid worked in the deck department and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. He most recently sailed aboard the *Innovation* and resides in Kingfield, Maine.



## JACEK SAWICKI

Brother Jacek Sawicki, 63, signed on with the union in 2001. He sailed in the engine department, first working aboard the *Coastal Reliance*. Brother Sawicki upgraded on numerous occasions at the Paul Hall Center. He concluded his career aboard the *Liberty* and makes his home in Rhinebeck, New York.



## SHELDON SLUSSER

Brother Sheldon Slusser, 65, donned the SIU colors in 1978 when he worked for American Barge Lines. He was a deck department member and upgraded at the Piney Point school on multiple occasions. Brother Slusser last shipped with Interstate Oil. He is a Philadelphia resident.



## ROBERT SULLIVAN

Brother Robert Sullivan, 69, became a member of the union in 1989. He worked in the deck department and was employed by G&H Towing for the duration of his career. Brother Sullivan calls Seadrift, Texas, home.

## BRYAN WELCH

Brother Bryan Welch, 58, began sailing with the Seafarers International Union in 1988, first working with Hvide Marine. Brother Welch was a deck department member, and upgraded his skills at the Paul Hall Center on multiple occasions. He last sailed with Bay Towing and lives in Hemphill, Texas.



# Final Departures

In solemn remembrance, we honor the legacies of these union members who have crossed the final bar. May they rest in peace.

## DEEP SEA

### RONALD BELCHER

Pensioner Ronald Belcher, 86, passed away March 4. He joined the union in 1986 and initially sailed aboard the *USNS Capella*. Brother Belcher worked in the engine department. He concluded his career aboard the *Mayaguez*, and went on pension in 2004. Brother Belcher called Jacksonville, Florida, home.

### JAMES CARLSON

Pensioner James Carlson, 75, died March 14. He became a member of the SIU in 1992 when he shipped on the *Sealift Indian Ocean*. Brother Carlson sailed in the deck department. He last shipped aboard the *Astrachem* and became a pensioner in 2015. Brother Carlson made his home in Alvin, Texas.



### JOHN DAY

Pensioner John Day, 74, has passed away. He began his career with the Seafarers in 1970, initially sailing aboard the *St. Louis*. Brother Day was an engine department member and last sailed on the *Horizon Anchorage*. He retired in 2011 and lived in Hinton, West Virginia.



### ALAN GARDNER

Pensioner Alan Gardner, 71, died February 13. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 1974 when he sailed aboard the *Columbia*. Brother Gardner worked in the engine department, and concluded his career aboard the *Golden Monarch* in 1990. He went on pension in 2019 and resided in Magnolia, Delaware.



### ANDREW KING

Pensioner Andrew King, 81, passed away March 9. He joined the SIU in 1995 and first sailed aboard the *USNS Kane*. Brother King sailed in the deck department and last shipped on the *Invincible*. He became a pensioner in 2013 and called Merritt Island, Florida, home.



### ROBERT RAMIREZ

Brother Robert Ramirez, 65, passed away February 15. He donned the SIU colors in 1996, first sailing aboard the *USNS Kane*. Brother Ramirez was a steward department member. He last sailed aboard the *USNS Watkins* and lived in Brownsville, Texas.



### JAMES REEVES

Pensioner James Reeves, 89, died February 25. He joined the union in 1957 when he shipped with Alcoa Steamship. Brother Reeves sailed in the deck department and last shipped aboard the *Overseas Joyce* in 1978. Brother Reeves went on pension in 2008 and resided in Semmes, Alabama.



### PHILIP REYNOLDS

Pensioner Philip Reynolds, 90, passed away December 8. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1994 and initially sailed aboard the *USNS Capella*. Brother Reynolds was a deck department member. He last shipped on the *Maersk Georgia* and became a pensioner in 2011. Brother Reynolds resided in Hopatcong, New Jersey.



### JOAN RILEY

Pensioner Joan Riley, 86, died March 4. She signed on with the SIU in 1992, initially sailing on the *Independence*. Sister Riley worked in the steward department. She concluded her career aboard the *Maui* before retiring in 2003. Sister Riley made her home in Gig Harbor, Washington.



### JAMES WHITE

Pensioner James White, 70, passed away February 15. Brother White started sailing with the union in 1974 when he shipped on the *St. Louis*. He worked in both the deck and engine departments. Brother White last shipped on the *Patriot* in 1987. He began collecting his pension in 2020 and made his home in Carrabelle, Florida.

## GREAT LAKES

### RESAT DILER

Pensioner Resat Diler, 66, died March 15. He joined the Seafarers union in 2003, first sailing aboard the *Presque Isle*. Brother Diler shipped in the deck department. He most recently sailed aboard the *Burns Harbor* before retiring in 2021. Brother Diler called Largo, Florida, home.



### ROBERT MASON

Pensioner Robert Mason, 70, died March 26. He began sailing with the Seafarers in 2000. Brother Mason's first and last vessel was the *John Boland*. He shipped in the deck department and became a pensioner in 2021. Brother Mason was a resident of Onaway, Michigan.



## INLAND

### FRANK AUERSWALD

Pensioner Frank Auerswald, 89, passed away February 8. He signed on with the Seafarers International Union in 1961. Brother Auerswald worked in the deck department, initially with Moran Towing of Philadelphia. He became a pensioner in 2004 after concluding his career with the same company. Brother Auerswald lived in San Antonio, Texas.

### RANDALL ELMORE

Brother Randall Elmore, 41, died February 19. He embarked on his career with the union in 2011. An engine department member, Brother Elmore was employed with G&H Towing for the duration of his career. He was a resident of Seabrook, Texas.

### RALPH GIBBS

Pensioner Ralph Gibbs, 89, passed away March 30. He began sailing with the SIU in 1961 when he worked aboard a Cape Waterways vessel. A deck department member, Brother Gibbs last sailed aboard the *Cape Hudson*. He retired in 2011 and settled in Crescent City, Florida.



### RICHARD PECK

Pensioner Richard Peck, 78, died December 31. He joined the SIU in 1982. A deck department member, Brother Peck was employed with the Association of Maryland Pilots for the duration of his career. He became a pensioner in 2013 and made his home in Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

### LOUIS WATTIGNEY

Pensioner Louis Wattigney, 67, passed away October 12. He embarked on his career with the Seafarers in 1978. Brother Wattigney was a deck department member and sailed with Crescent Towing and Salvage for his entire career. He became a pensioner in 2020 and lived in Belle Chasse, Louisiana.



## NMU

### MOHAMED HADWAN

Pensioner Mohamed Hadwan, 72, passed away January 26. Brother Hadwan worked in the deck department and last shipped on the *Green Cove*. He became a pensioner in 2002 and lived in San Francisco.



### JOSEPH SICILIANI

Pensioner Joseph Siciliani, 84, passed away February 17. Brother Siciliani was a member of the deck department. He last sailed with Penn Maritime and retired in 1999. Brother Siciliani made his home in Limington, Maine.

### ALAWI TAFFI

Pensioner Alawi Taffi, 86, died February 15. Brother Taffi worked in the deck department. He last shipped aboard the *Endeavor* before becoming a pensioner in 1998. Brother Taffi lived in Oakland, California.

### MANUEL TORO

Pensioner Manuel Toro, 99, passed away February 11. Brother Toro was a deck department member. He retired in 2001, after concluding his career aboard the *Lykes Navigator*. Brother Toro was a resident of Pembroke Pines, Florida.

# Digest of Shipboard Union Meetings

The Seafarers LOG attempts to print as many digests of union shipboard minutes as possible. On occasion, because of space limitations, some will be omitted. Ships' minutes first are reviewed by the union's contract department. Those issues requiring attention or resolution are addressed by the union upon receipt of the ships' minutes. The minutes are then forwarded to the Seafarers LOG for publication.

**MIDWAY** (Argent Marine Operations), January 9 - Chairman **Nicholas Turano**, Secretary **Tristan Cordero**, Deck Delegate **Gilberto Castillo**, Engine Delegate **Rodney Holmes**, Steward Delegate **Nathan Tissaw**. Crew discussed overall wellbeing aboard vessel. Members looked over *Seafarers LOGS* and discussed document renewals. Educational director encouraged members to upgrade at the union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. Deck delegate asked crew to be mindful of active projects on deck. Engine delegate urged members to stay hydrated. Steward delegate reminded crew to keep mess decks clean. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew preparing for Navy security team. Members requested new mattresses and unlimited Starlink access.

**AMERICAN LIBERTY** (Intrepid Personnel & Provisioning), March 8 - Chairman **Virgilio Rosales**, Secretary **Jermaine Robinson**, Educational Director **Victor Arzu**, Deck Delegate **Emilio Gonzalez**. New ice machine and new toaster received. Everything is going well on board and no issues reported per chairman. Secretary encouraged crew to ask questions if they don't know something and to take pride in their work. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like to increase safety shoe allowance to \$150.

**MAERSK KENSINGTON** (Maersk Line, Limited), March 15 - Chairman **Carlos Gibbons**, Secretary **Virnabeth Cano**. Members went over old business, including ongoing requests for TVs for all unlicensed crew cabins. Chairman talked about enrollment information for upgrading and reminded crew that the *Seafarers LOG* is available online. Educational director recommended crew upgrade at the Piney Point school. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members reviewed letter of understanding from captain about high-risk bonus pay. Crew asked to increase budget in foreign ports for basic items, especially with four additional people on board. Members requested increases in pension and dental benefits, annual physical exams and a coffee maker in crew mess.

**POHANG PIONEER** (U.S. Marine Management), March 15 - Chairman **Martin Baker**, Secretary **Charles Sassone**, Educational Director **Joseph Flotta**, Deck Delegate **Alex-Stephen Amarra**, Engine Delegate **Kingdom Alozie**, Steward Delegate **Carlton McMiller**. Chairman discussed various union topics including Seafarers Money Purchase Pension Plan (SMPPP), and Seafarers Political Activity Donation (SPAD). Educational director reminded crew to upgrade their skills at the Paul Hall Center and to renew documents early. No beefs or disputed OT reported. New grill requested. Crew

would like 20 for 30 vacation, increases in medical benefits, increases in wages to match rising cost of living and to change retirement age. Members requested new linens, new pillows and gym equipment. Next port: Yokohama, Japan.

**INDEPENDENCE** (TOTE Services), March 22 - Chairman **Shatina Wright**, Secretary **Donald Mann**. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members would like overtime rates to be the same as standard contract. Crew requested increases in vacation pay and asked for clarification on AB penalty pay. Next port: Baltimore.

**MIDWAY** (Argent Marine Operations), March 25 - Chairman **Nicholas Turano**. Chairman discussed the 60-day Jones Act waiver issued by the administration and how it affects U.S. sailors. Educational director advised members to upgrade at the Piney Point school. Crew fund is to be used to purchase new gym equipment and household items. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members discussed active war zone pay for future ports.

**NATIONAL GLORY** (Pasha), April 5 - Chairman **Augusto Barbareno**, Secretary **Lionel Packnett**. Crew recommends increasing vacation from 14 to 15 days. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Members requested new dryers in crew laundry room, TVs in

all unlicensed crew cabins and working refrigerators in each cabin. Vote of thanks was given to steward department for providing outstanding meals.

**MARINER** (Eco-Tankers Crew Management), April 11 - Chairman **German Nunez**, Deck Delegate **Yafet Antah**, Engine Delegate **Bertram Solomon**, Steward Delegate **Trason Glynn**. Chairman and educational director urged crew to upgrade their skills at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. No beefs or disputed OT reported. Crew requested 20 for 30 vacation. Next port: Port Arthur, Texas.

**SLNC SEVERN** (Argent Marine Operations), April 20 - Chairman **David Brady**, Secretary **Yohanes Pribadi**, Educational Director **Stephen Reed**. Educational director reviewed new procedures for extending medical certificates and credentials through U.S. Coast Guard's National Maritime Center. No beefs or disputed OT reported. New clothes dryer needed on board. Issues with payroll reported. Company is working on resolving paycheck issues. Members requested increase in vacation benefits along with raises in pay. Crew requested new pillowcases and bedding. Next port: Singapore.

## Know Your Rights

**FINANCIAL REPORTS.** The Constitution of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters makes specific provision for safeguarding the membership's money and union finances. The constitution requires a detailed audit by certified public accountants every year, which is to be submitted to the membership by the secretary-treasurer. A yearly finance committee of rank-and-file members, elected by the membership, each year examines the finances of the union and reports fully their findings and recommendations. Members of this committee may make dissenting reports, specific recommendations and separate findings.

**TRUST FUNDS.** All trust funds of the SIU Atlantic, Gulf, Lakes and Inland Waters District are administered in accordance with the provisions of various trust fund agreements. All these agreements specify that the trustees in charge of these funds shall equally consist of union and management representatives and their alternates. All expenditures and disbursements of trust funds are made only upon approval by a majority of the trustees. All trust fund financial records are available at the headquarters of the various trust funds.

**SHIPPING RIGHTS.** A member's shipping rights and seniority are protected exclusively by contracts between the union and the employers. Members should get to know their shipping rights. Copies of these contracts are posted and available in all union halls. If members believe there have been violations of their shipping or seniority rights as contained in the contracts between the union and the employers, they should notify the Seafarers Appeals Board by certified mail, return

receipt requested. The proper address for this is:

George Tricker, Chairman  
Seafarers Appeals Board  
5201 Capital Gateway Drive  
Camp Springs, MD 20746

Full copies of contracts as referred to are available to members at all times, either by writing directly to the union or to the Seafarers Appeals Board.

**CONTRACTS.** Copies of all SIU contracts are available in all SIU halls. These contracts specify the wages and conditions under which an SIU member works and lives aboard a ship or boat. Members should know their contract rights, as well as their obligations, such as filing for overtime (OT) on the proper sheets and in the proper manner. If, at any time, a member believes that an SIU patrolman or other union official fails to protect their contractual rights properly, he or she should contact the nearest SIU port agent.

**EDITORIAL POLICY — THE SEAFARERS LOG.** The *Seafarers LOG* traditionally has refrained from publishing any article serving the political purposes of any individual in the union, officer or member. It also has refrained from publishing articles deemed harmful to the union or its collective membership. This established policy has been reaffirmed by membership action at the September 1960 meetings in all constitutional ports. The responsibility for *Seafarers LOG* policy is vested in an editorial board which consists of the executive board of the union. The executive board may delegate, from among its ranks, one individual to carry out this responsibility.

**PAYMENT OF MONIES.** No monies are to be paid to anyone in any official capacity in the SIU unless an official union receipt is given for same. Under no circumstances should any member pay any money for any reason unless he is given such receipt. In the event anyone attempts to require any such payment be made without supplying a receipt, or if a member is required to make a payment and is given an official receipt, but feels that he or she should not have been required to make such payment, this should immediately be reported to union headquarters.

**CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS.** Copies of the SIU Constitution are available in all union halls. All members should obtain copies of this constitution so as to familiarize themselves with its contents. Any time a member feels any other member or officer is attempting to deprive him or her of any constitutional right or obligation by any methods, such as dealing with charges, trials, etc., as well as all other details, the member so affected should immediately notify headquarters.

**EQUAL RIGHTS.** All members are guaranteed equal rights in employment and as members of the SIU. These rights are clearly set forth in the SIU Constitution and in the contracts which the union has negotiated with the employers. Consequently, no member may be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, sex, national or geographic origin.

If any member feels that he or she is denied the equal rights to which he or she is entitled, the member should notify union headquarters.

**SEAFARERS POLITICAL ACTIVITY DONATION (SPAD).** SPAD is a separate segregated fund. Its proceeds are used to further its objects and purposes including, but not limited to, furthering the political, social and economic interests of maritime workers, the preservation and furthering of the American merchant marine with improved employment opportunities for seamen and boatmen and the advancement of trade union concepts. In connection with such objects, SPAD supports and contributes to political candidates for elective office. All contributions are voluntary. No contribution may be solicited or received because of force, job discrimination, financial reprisal, or threat of such conduct, or as a condition of membership in the union or of employment. If a contribution is made by reason of the above improper conduct, the member should notify the Seafarers International Union or SPAD by certified mail within 30 days of the contribution for investigation and appropriate action and refund, if involuntary. A member should support SPAD to protect and further his or her economic, political and social interests, and American trade union concepts.

**NOTIFYING THE UNION —** If at any time a member feels that any of the above rights have been violated, or that he or she has been denied the constitutional right of access to union records or information, the member should immediately notify SIU President David Heindel at headquarters by certified mail, return receipt requested. The address is:

David Heindel, President  
Seafarers International Union  
5201 Capital Gateway Drive  
Camp Springs, MD 20746

# Paul Hall Center Upgrading Course Dates

Printed below are dates for courses scheduled to take place at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, located in Piney Point, Maryland. The QR code connects to a web page with the latest course dates (they may differ from what's printed here, though in most cases the only changes are additions that haven't yet made it into the LOG). Seafarers are welcome to contact the admissions office with questions about upgrading courses: (301) 899-0657, [admissions@seafarers.org](mailto:admissions@seafarers.org)

Latest Course Dates



Title of Course	Start Date	Date of Completion
<b>DECK DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Able Seafarer - Deck	July 27 September 21	August 14 October 9
RFPNW	June 29 August 3	July 17 August 21
<b>ENGINE DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Boiler Technician (FOWT)	July 6 August 24 October 19	July 31 September 18 November 13
Marine Electrician	August 3	September 4
Marine Refrigeration Tech.	June 22	July 31
Adv. Refrig. Cont. Maint. (ARCM)	September 14	September 25
Machinist	August 10	August 28
Pumpman	August 31	September 4
Welding	July 27 September 21	August 14 October 9

<b>STEWARD DEPARTMENT UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Certified Chief Cook	June 22 August 31 November 9	August 28 November 6 January 15, 2027
Galley Operations	August 24 September 21 October 19	September 18 October 16 November 13
Chief Steward	September 14 December 7	October 9 January 1, 2027
Adv. Galley Operations	June 22 July 20 August 17	July 17 August 14 September 11
<b>OPEN/SAFETY UPGRADING COURSES</b>		
Basic Training Revalidation	July 10 August 10 August 14 September 18	July 10 August 10 August 14 September 18
Tanker Ship Fam. - DL	September 21	September 25
Tanker Ship Fam. - LG	September 14	September 18
Basic Training/Adv. FF Reval.	August 17 November 2	August 18 November 3

## Notice

### Upgrading Class Registration Now Available Online

Recently, the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education has unveiled a new option for mariners looking to continue improving and upgrading their skills: The class registration form is now online. Simply fill out the form with your information, check which classes you are interested in, and hit Submit. This will make the course registration process faster, more modern and easier than ever for members to use.



Please visit [www.seafarers.org/upgrading-application](http://www.seafarers.org/upgrading-application), or scan the QR code at right.

### Annual Funding Notice For Seafarers Pension Plan (Continued)

Continued from Page 7

If such resources are not enough to pay benefits at the level specified by law (see Benefit Payments Guaranteed by PBGC, below), the plan must apply to PBGC for financial assistance. PBGC will loan the plan the amount necessary to pay benefits at the guaranteed level. Reduced benefits may be restored if the plan's financial condition improves.

A plan that becomes insolvent must provide prompt notice of its status to participants and beneficiaries, contributing employers, labor unions representing participants, and PBGC. In addition, participants and beneficiaries also must receive information regarding whether, and how, their benefits will be reduced or affected, including loss of a lump sum option.

#### 10) Benefit Payments Guaranteed by PBGC

Only vested benefits—those that you've earned and cannot forfeit—are guaranteed.

#### What PBGC Guarantees

PBGC guarantees "basic benefits" including:

- Pension benefits at normal retirement age.
- Most early retirement benefits.
- Annuity benefits for survivors of plan participants.
- Disability benefits for disabilities that occurred before the earlier of the date the plan terminated or the sponsor's bankruptcy date.

#### What PBGC Does Not Guarantee

PBGC does not guarantee certain types of benefits, including:

- A participant's pension benefit or benefit increase until it has been part of the plan for 60 full months.
- Disability benefits in non-pay status.
- Non-pension benefits, such as health insurance, or death benefits.

#### Determining Guarantee Amounts

The maximum benefit PBGC guarantees is set by law. Your plan is covered by PBGC's multiemployer program. The maximum PBGC guarantee is \$35.75 per month, multiplied by a participant's years of credited service.

PBGC guarantees a monthly benefit based on the plan's monthly benefit accrual rate and your years of credited service. The guarantee is calculated as follows:

1. Take 100 percent of the first \$11 of the Plan's monthly benefit accrual rate.
2. Take 75 percent of the next \$33 of the accrual rate.
3. Add both amounts together.
4. Multiply the total by your years of credited service to determine your guaranteed monthly benefit.

Example 1: Participant with a Monthly \$600 Benefit and 10 Years of Service.

1. Find the accrual rate:  $\$600/10 = \$60$  accrual rate.
  2. Apply PBGC formula:
    - a. Take 100 percent of the first \$11 = \$11
    - b. Take 75 percent of the next \$33 = \$24.75
  3. Add the two amounts together:  $\$11 + \$24.75 = \$35.75$
  4. Multiply by years of credited service:  $\$35.75 \times 10 \text{ years} = \$357.50$
- In this example, the participant's guaranteed monthly benefit is \$357.50.

Example 2: Participant with a \$200 Monthly Benefit and 10 Years of Service.

1. Find the accrual rate:  $\$200/10 = \$20$  accrual rate.
  2. Apply PBGC formula:
    - a. Take 100 percent of the first \$11 = \$11
    - b. Take 75 percent of the next \$9 = \$6.75
  3. Add the two amounts together:  $\$11 + \$6.75 = \$17.75$
  4. Multiply by years of credited service:  $\$17.75 \times 10 \text{ years} = \$177.50$
- In this example, the participant's guaranteed monthly benefit is \$177.50

# Paul Hall Center Class Photos



**APPRENTICE WATER SURVIVAL CLASS #932** – Recently graduated: Nicholas Allbritton, Samuel Alvarado, Gustavo Anavitate, Simeon Dailey, Kendell Dorsey, Kenneth Gale, Brandon Givens, Kenneth Gonzalez, Kelton Greene, Ian Higgs, Christopher Jack, Sabrina Jean-Baptiste, Jakod McCall, Patrick O'Malley, Maria Ortiz Soto, Jeremiah Pope, David Ray, Demetria Rhue, Rory Smith and Ricardo Vasquez.



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG)** – Above (not all are pictured): Ranease Berry, Jessica Edmondson, Bailey Hilkey, Frank Lang, Joshua Laverdure, Marco Leguizamo, Claire Nelson, David Oliver, Alex Phillips, Evan Plyler, Jesuhan Polanco Rivera, Ajay Ray, Conner Sommerfield, Derrick Ward, Jaylen Williams and Jake Zamora.



**BASIC FIREFIGHTING** – Graduated recently (not all are pictured): Brian Baker, Vinci Bhardwaj, Dominick Duffy, Ashton Ealy, Liam Fleming, Brian Ford, Carie Kelsheimer, Kyle Leirvik, Charles McAllister V, Alexander Mesa, George Mouras, Corinthian Patterson, Drake Plascencia, De'Karee Porter, Shamon Taylor and Jun Yoon.



**CERTIFIED CHIEF COOK (MODULE 4)** – Graduated March 27 (not all are pictured): Sequoya Anderson, Avere Branch, Jamequia Cherry, Zainab Dexter, Julius Douglas, Seth Norris, Michael Noyd, Carmen Sanchez, Michael Saputo, Monique Smith, Alayla Tilley, Theresa Walrath and Zamariya Wilson.



**RFPNW (UPGRADERS)** – Graduated March 27: Jean Irish (left) and Steven Mussared.



**WELDING** – Graduated April 3: Ismael Andriamasy, Kamaria LaPread and Emmanuel Santos Capulong. Instructor Chris Raley is at the far right.

# Paul Hall Center Class Photos



**GOVERNMENT VESSELS** – Recently graduated: James Artis, Elijah Busch, Daniel Cho, Kelvin Huffman, Kaitlyn Lipka, Alec Neace, Joseph Romanowski, Cameron Slayton, Dylan Storie, Maciej Szmytkowski, Dena Turner and Cole Waddell.



**ADVANCED GALLEY OPS** – Graduated April 24: Michelle Conage, Gennaro Dimatteo, William Otero Munoz, Souleymane Tamla, Kimberly Vargas and Glen Ward.



**FOWT (COMBINED)** – Graduated April 10 (not all are pictured): Edwin Abueg Jr., Cedricka Banks, Jason Binosa, Curt Burgoyne, Korgan Chalker, Zurriel Davis, Mario Dolmo Nunez, Eugene Draghi, Ralpheal Evans, Jeremy Fazio, Shauni Franklin, Nasir Hinton, Harry Hurley, Tristan Kinsella, Gideon Korley, Darea McCarthy, Bryce Perry, Adarius Simpson, Jermerish Standberry, Jyheir Thompson, Ronnie Ward Jr., Talib Weatherspoon and Noah Welch.



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (DL)** – Graduated recently: Abdulaziz Alfakih, Carlos Arzu, Charles Bishop, Randy Corey, Michael Curtin, Jermaine Gillis, Kimonta Hall, Alvin Harper, Reshawn Latimer, Sultan Mosa, Shamar Rhoden, Grandvil Whitsett III and J Lon Williams.



**GOVERNMENT VESSELS (UPGRADERS)** – Graduated April 10: Abdelaziz Akil, Jonathan Haefner, Shirley Jenkins, Walter Lewis Jr. and James McQuigg.



**JUNIOR ENGINEER PROGRAM** – Above (not all are pictured): William Alston III, Ricky Anderson Jr., Luel Berhanu, Justin Brown, Napoleon Butler, Trinity Carter, Ashanty Castillo, Brandon Cavitt, Richard Cole, Robert Crain, Chidiadi Floyd, Bryan Halista, Justine Headen, Joshua Higdon, Timothy Jones, Micheal King, Tariq Mamudu, Paloma Mendez, Wilson Montero Centeno, Samuel Penn, Julianne Perez Borroto Sanchez, Donald Slue, Dallas Smith and Cedric Wallace Jr.

# Paul Hall Center Class Photos



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (DL)** – Graduated recently: Brian Baker, Vinci Bhardwaj, Dominick Duffy, Ashton Ealy, Jessica Edmondson, Liam Fleming, Brian Ford, Carie Kelsheimer, Kyle Leirvik, Charles McAllister V, Alexander Mesa, George Mouras, Corinthian Patterson, Drake Plascencia, De'Karee Porter, James Strutchen, Shamon Taylor and Jun Yoon.



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG)** – Graduated April 3 (not all are pictured): Ajmed Ahmed, Mustafa Ahmed, Gilma David, Matthew Ditullio, Te'angela Grant, Kimonta Hall, Alvin Harper, Antonio Holmes, Reshawn Latimer, Nicholas Markowitz, Waverly Moore, Arnold Perry, Shamar Rhoden, Ben Skuban, Oscar Vencer III, Brittani White and Grandvil Whitsett III.



**UA TO ASD** – Graduated recently: Mark Baillie, Kaleb Brock, Benjamin Brown, Max Cronley, William Folzenlogen, Kemar Grant, Robert Kitchen III, Christopher Leasure, Nathan Martinez, Robert McMahon, Langston Mejia-Johnson, Michael Murray, Aniyah Napier, Tyrone Ousley Jr., Justice Rodriguez and Isaiah Smith.



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG)** – Graduated recently: Brian Baker, Dominick Duffy, Ashton Ealy, Jessica Edmondson, Liam Fleming, Brian Ford, Carie Kelsheimer, Kyle Leirvik, Charles McAllister V, Alexander Mesa, George Mouras, Corinthian Patterson, Drake Plascencia, De'Karee Porter, James Strutchen, Shamon Taylor and Jun Yoon.



**TANK SHIP FAMILIARIZATION (LG - UPGRADERS)** – Graduated recently (not all are pictured): Marissa Armstead, Carlos Arzu, Sarah Gross, Kenji Hoffman, Sulay Martinez, Lyndon Ocampo and Jacolby Robinson.



**GOVERNMENT VESSELS** – Graduated recently: Ranease Berry, Bailey Hilkey, Frank Lang, Joshua Laverdure, Claire Nelson, David Oliver, Alex Phillips, Evan Plyler, Jesuhan Polanco Rivera, Derrick Ward, Jaylen Williams and Jake Zamora.

# SEAFARERS LOG

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEAFARERS INTERNATIONAL UNION – ATLANTIC, GULF, LAKES AND INLAND WATERS, AFL-CIO

## SIU-Crewed LNG Carrier Reliably Serves Puerto Rico In Jones Act Trade

SIU-contracted Crowley in mid-April marked one year of operations of the Seafarers-crewed *American Energy*, the first U.S.-flagged liquefied natural gas (LNG) carrier dedicated to serving Puerto Rico.

“I want to congratulate Crowley on achieving this milestone, marking the first anniversary of LNG deliveries to Puerto Rico by the vessel *American Energy*, a U.S.-flagged service dedicated to supplying our power needs,” said Gov. Jenniffer González-Colón of Puerto Rico. “Crowley’s efforts help to strengthen our energy sector’s resiliency and to support jobs and investment in a partnership to ensure safe, affordable electricity for our people. We will always support such initiatives that advance Puerto Rico’s energy security and economic growth.”

Since its first delivery in March 2025, the *American Energy*, sailing in the Jones Act trade, has transported approximately 549 million gallons of U.S.-sourced LNG to Puerto Rico, providing enough energy to power about 1.2 million homes on the island for a year. The delivered volume also represents a reduction of carbon emissions by nearly 30% compared to diesel.

“Reaching one year of uninterrupted service with *American Energy* represents more than a performance milestone; it represents dependable access to energy for Puerto Rico,” said Jackie Gonzalez, vice president of advanced energy for Crowley. “Over the past year, this vessel has helped provide the



In this file photo from early 2025, pictured in the crew mess are (from left) SIU Port Agent J.B. Niday, Electrician Edwin Velez, Bosun Raul Colon Matos, AB Wilson Ruiz, SA Nadia Forester, Recertified Steward Edwin Bonefont, Chief Cook Carlos Colon De Jesus, ABM Victor Velez Perez, ABM Victor Cortes Maldonado, and SIU Port Agent Kelly Krick.

consistent, secure transportation of LNG that families, businesses and communities rely on every day. That reliability supports economic activity, essential services and greater energy confidence across the island.”

According to Crowley, in addition to contributing to Puerto Rico’s energy resilience, the *American Energy* “has played a role in strengthening the U.S. mariner workforce over the past year. The vessel has employed 90 U.S. mariners, including 16 cadets and apprentices, with nearly 20% from Puerto Rico, helping to expand maritime career pathways and support the island’s skilled workforce.”

In a news release announcing the milestone, the company said the vessel “builds on Crowley’s more than 70-year commitment to Puerto Rico and its

longstanding role in supporting the island’s energy and logistics needs. Through a multiyear partnership with global energy company Naturgy, the vessel delivers LNG to the EcoEléctrica power generation facility in Peñuelas, helping provide a steady supply of energy that supports homes, businesses and critical infrastructure. Alongside its LNG carrier operations, Crowley operates a full-service cargo terminal in San Juan, supporting container ships and roll on/roll off barges, including two LNG-fueled vessels, along with integrated logistics services. The company also supplies approximately 94 million gallons of LNG annually to industries across Puerto Rico from its LNG Loading Terminal in Peñuelas and provides transportation through ISO tank containers.”

