



Labor Division

December 2023 Newsletter

A little more than a month has passed since the Fall 2023 Labor Division meetings in New Orleans. In addition, as hard as it is to believe, the Thanksgiving celebrations have given way to memories and on many calendars the pending seminal events will be one or more of the various holidays that take us into the last of 2023 and on to 2024. As the new Chairperson of the Division, and on behalf of the entire division executive, it is important to wish all of you the happiest of times through this very special season. Please also allow us to remind each of you that none of this happiness is possible unless the safety and health of each of us, those we work with and those we are closest to, is our first consideration.

The American Automobile Association, AAA (Triple A), in a report released on December 1st, 2023, provided the startling statistic that sixty percent of drivers engage in risky behavior behind the wheel. Of note are distracted driving, speeding and aggressive driving. Through education and training the NSC and the NSC divisions such as the Labor Division, the NHTSA and hundreds, if not thousands of employers get us to behave behind the wheel while we are at work. Noted by the AAA, the items above are critical to the safety and health of us all. As a group of people connected to and representing workers, we cannot be silent on the dangers to workers in roadway work zones and undertaking work adjacent to our roadways. Please make sure that we add extreme care and caution when driving by these workers and through such work zones.

All too often safe and healthy workplace behaviors do not always carry over into our personal lives. This recognition of good driving behaviors as well as other sound safety and health behaviors in the workplace not carrying over to our personal lives has become a driving force behind some workplaces developing and implementing off the job safety and health programs for their employees.

Off-the-job safety and health programs are about a commitment to carry the good behaviors out of the workplace and into our lives away from work. To the surprise of no one, such programs are not typically enforceable in the same way that rules in the workplace are, but nevertheless, committing to such a program is all about people making an ethical choice and undertaking a commitment that will result in lives saved and pain and suffering diminished in a profound and measurable way. Fine Safety Professionals such as Allen Sloan from IBEW Local 11 in Los Angeles give us a tangible example to aspire to. Whenever people are in the vehicle with Allen, the first thing he makes sure of is that everyone puts their seatbelts on before the

car is in drive. Parents and grandparents might even remember telling our youngest passengers that the vehicle does not move until the seatbelts are on.

How is this part of the holiday message? As Chairperson of the Labor Division, I am asking each of you to commit to the same ideals so that not only the holidays, but our lives in general will be a living and breathing example of saving lives and preventing suffering and injury.

It would not be an end of year message without ensuring that people are reminded of the upcoming Labor Division meetings in Rhode Island. Providence RI will host two very important meetings in March. March 4th to 6th will be the IBEW Safety Caucus and this is immediately followed by the NSC Labor Division meetings from March 7th to 9th. These meetings will be held at the Omni Providence Hotel in Rhode Island.

Registration Information:

[2024 NSC Labor Division Spring Meeting - Choose Registration \(eventscloud.com\)](#)

Taking time to celebrate those making a difference has always been our way in this division, so as we approach March it is imperative that people take the time to consider nominating people for recognition at our meetings. There are so many in the world of safety and health and in the union movement deserving of recognition, let's not hesitate to nominate them. Forms and help with this are available on the NSC Labor Division website.

Thank you to each of you for your ongoing work, and on behalf of the Labor Division, thank you for your support and for sharing what we learn with others to save lives, prevent injury and guard against disease in the workplace.

Finishing up 2023 and moving into 2024 represents a time of celebration and charity across a vast portion of the world and in many different faiths. Urged by a significant portion of the faiths of the world, a bit of research tells us that nearly all faiths embrace sentiments that are representative of words often repeated, "to treat others as we would wish to be treated ourselves". As a division made up of safety and health activists, our foundation is in the Labor Movement. The keystone of the movement is looking out for each other. This is not possible without kindness and compassion. Although felt keenly during this period, kindness and compassion will hopefully find a home in all of us throughout the year with the likely outcome that we all feel accepted and that our workplaces are even more healthy for all of us.

In Solidarity, Bob Stone, Chairperson NSC Labor Division

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