

In the afterglow of a few days in the “Big Easy” those in attendance at the Labor Division Fall meetings and those also attending the NSC Congress and Expo have a lot to talk about and a lot to share when they get home and get back in their workplaces. It is in the sharing that we accomplish that which is most important. The adage that “Safety is not a Secret” resonates within all the divisions of the NSC and nowhere more loudly than in the Labor Division.

After all is said and done, it is this dedicated and dynamic group of one hundred plus workers/union members/union leaders/apprentices/ that will meet workers, those most at risk of workplace injury, fatality and work-related occupational illness, where they are everyday-on the job/at the workplace/and anyplace where hands on work is done. For decades, and just as importantly now, this sharing and education prevents injury, death and illness over and over again in workplaces in the United States and beyond.

Before any description of the sessions can be talked about, it must be said that all those that participated in anyway, the division executive, the committee chairs and vice chairs, presenters and the truly indispensable NSC staff all deserve profound thanks for not just making the meetings a success, but for the vast amount of work that went into preparing us for this very success. Work that went back to June in St. Paul Minnesota and before.



“We Know Joe”. Simple words embroidered on a shirt due to the tireless Keith Pendergast and his efforts to ensure a souvenir shirt is ready for each set of division meetings, but words that will evermore be associated with these Fall meetings. Having been presented by the NSC with the Distinguished Service to Safety Award (DSSA), Joe Grabinski joined a very small group of people from our Division that have been honored this way. An honor proudly worn by all in receipt of the DSSA. In the Division house this week, along with Joe, two other DSSA winners were present and remain fully engaged in the activities of the Division and the NSC. Our Division is something that we can all boast about.

The Division honored many of our own with awards for life saving and recognition of Ken Morris with Ken receiving the first presentation of the Joe Grabinski Industrial Safety Award. A year ago, Joe was present for the inauguration of the award in his name to recognize not only excelling in the fundamentals of the Labor Division but recognizing innovation and sustainability within the division and beyond. A very big part of the Labor Division is the awards process. Please take the time to look into this and nominate people. We all know someone or an organization deserving of recognition.

What will people be sharing when they get home? Sessions and speakers touched on a wide variety of topics:

- Personal stories of injury and lessons learned.
- Proper use and selection of personal protective equipment in the area of fire-retardant clothing.
- Proper use and selection of personal protective (PPE) equipment such that all workers have access to well designed and fitted (PPE).
- Myth of the Careless Worker and a look at hazard based and behavior-based safety.
- Three-hour session from CPWR on Foundations for Safety Leadership Program.
- Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences presentation on Mental Health in the Workplace.
- A VIP experience discussing and demonstrating innovations in safety and health at the Expo on Tuesday.
- Building a Safe Transportation Culture presented by the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.
- On top of all this the committee meetings addressed many items of interest, including electrical safety, ergonomics, construction, environmental, and industrial safety.
- The Division was well represented on the lunch panel on diversity, equity and inclusion.



The delegates to the meetings will be home and, in the workplace very soon and would like nothing more than their sisters and brothers to ask questions of them. These same delegates will want to share all they have learned. This sharing is possible in so many ways. One on one, crew meetings, presentations at union meetings and written reports. It does not matter how people come to receive this vast treasure trove of information, just know it is there and it may save a life or the misery of injury or illness from the workplace.

With eyes firmly fixed on the future, the division has named a new Chairperson, Brother Bob Stone has stepped into the role, and it is with great appreciation that we say thank you to Paul Chaney (and all past Chairs) as he passes the gavel, yet Paul remains close at hand to help with Bob's new and exciting duties as transition takes place.

No set of meetings is complete without hollering about our charitable success. The division's heart was on full display at the Welcoming Reception as the Labor Division donated over \$3000.00 to assist with meals and services for those most in need in the New Orleans area.



The numbers in attendance have put the Labor Division at numbers equal to or better than pre-COVID. This by itself is testament to our work and commitment. Add to this the ever-increasing number of those attending for the first time and young workers and apprentices and the future of the division is indeed bright.

On behalf of the NSC Labor Division, I wish all of you success and safety and health.

In Solidarity

Bob Stone, Chairperson, NSC Labor Division

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