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International President

September 25, 2020

To: All USW Local Union Presidents and Recording Secretaries:

**Subject: 2020 USW Virtual Education Conference: Smart is Stronger
November 17-18, 2020**

Greetings:

We are excited to announce our first virtual education conference: Smarter is Stronger! While we would rather see you in person, we think this two-day virtual education conference will help to close the gap created by the pandemic that has forced the cancelation or postponement of so many in-person events.

We are proud of the way we have all sustained the work of the union. Locals continue to negotiate contracts and represent members, districts are doing online steward and officer trainings, and we have organized new members during this crisis. Thank you for all you have done on the local level to keep the union functioning in these unprecedented times. Through all of this, together, we have continued to work to provide the resources needed to best represent our members, and fight for safe and equitable workplaces.

This education conference will consist of nearly 100 different training sessions about representation, officer duties, health and safety, and many other topics that reinforce the great work of our union and provide you with practical knowledge to take back to your local and workplace. We will also have District Breakouts and opportunities to socialize with others from our activist groups like Veterans of Steel and Next Gen. See the attached sheet for more information on how the conference works.

The conference will take place on Tuesday, November 17 and Wednesday, November 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. EST.

Registration for the conference will open on Thursday, October 1, 2020 and will close as of Monday, November 16 at 12:00 pm (EST)/9:00 am (PST). Participants are required to pre-register for classes online prior to the start of the conference due to limited capacity in some of the trainings. Once registered, you will receive information about additional classes, required hardware and internet connection, and how to access the conference through your device. Don't worry if you have never done an online conference; we will have training sessions ahead of time to make sure you are comfortable participating on your phone, tablet or computer.



This conference will be structured like in-person USW training. You will choose the classes you want to attend, register for them (choose early!) and once the class you have selected begins, just push the attend button --much like you would walk into the room at an in-person conference.

How to register:

The website is your one stop conference center! With nearly 100 different classes offered, you will need to go on-line to see all of them but below are some examples from some of the tracks. You can choose classes from different topics or attend all of the classes from the single topic that interests you. **Although the conference does not have a fee, please only register delegates that will attend. Space is limited.**

Examples of workshops:

The schedule and full list of workshops will be released in the coming weeks. However, here are a couple of examples of topics and workshops that will be available during the conference.

Health and Safety: Hazard Mapping: Assessing Hazards at Work

- ☒ This training will help members map areas of health and safety concerns within their workplace, especially in regards to new guidelines to protect workers against the coronavirus disease 2019, or COVID-19.

Collective Bargaining: The Laws of Collective Bargaining

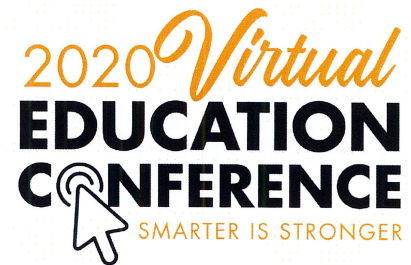
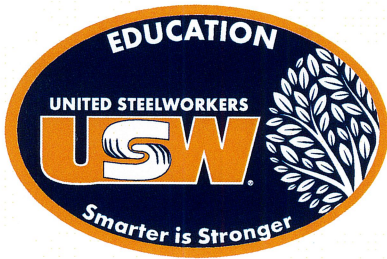
- ☒ In this workshop we'll review the most basic aspects of the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the employer's duty to bargain. We'll briefly look at the Union's right to information; mandatory, permissive, and prohibited subjects; and the different types of strikes and lock-outs.

Steward Training: Investigating Grievances

- ☒ Sharpen your grievance handling skills by learning how to thoroughly investigate a possible discipline or contract violation. Participants will learn how to gather and document facts and practice interviewing techniques.

Advanced Steward Training: FMLA

- ☒ Since it was signed into law, The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) has become a key tool for working people when life takes unexpected turns. This workshop will include a basic overview of important provisions of FMLA.



United Steelworkers Education

2020 Virtual Education Conference: Smarter is Stronger

November 17-18, 2020

- * More than 90 different sessions covering health and safety, bargaining, stewards rights and roles, organizing, building power through legislation...so much more,
- * Go to www.usw.org/educationconference for registration and more info,
- * Free for all USW members! Registration Code: **USW1942**

Five Weeks of Free On-line Classes Leading up to the Conference

(All Classes start at 7:30 PM Eastern Standard Time)

- * Week 1 (Wednesday, October 14) "We Are Steelworkers"
- * Week 2 (Wednesday, October 21) "The Union Difference"
- * Week 3 (Wednesday, October 28) "An Introduction to Collective Bargaining"
- * Week 4 (Wednesday, November 4) "Leading an Effective Local Union"
- * Week 5 (Wednesday, November 11) "Union Stewards 101"

Go to <https://education.usw.org/blog> to get the class registration links.

Everyday Education

The USW has a series of online education videos available for your use when and where works for you...on your computer, phone or tablet. Topics include investigating and writing grievances, FMLA, and contract interpretation.

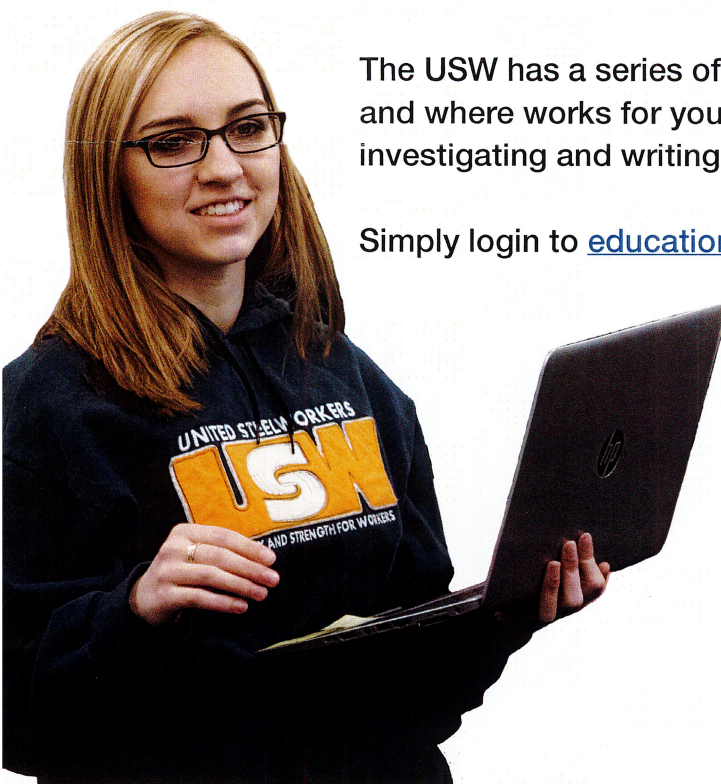
Simply login to education.usw.org for more information

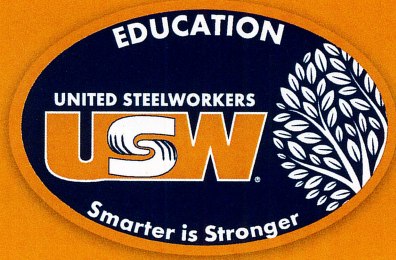
Stewards Corner: The USW's Steward Newsletter

Our new stewards' newsletter is available to all stewards and grievors. Go to www.usw.org/StewardsCorner to register to receive it in your email.

For more information about classes the education department is offering, please visit:

<https://www.usw.org/act/activism/education>





STEWARDS' CORNER

Monthly Newsletter for Union Stewards & Workplace Leaders

Welcome to the *Stewards' Corner*, a monthly publication of the USW Department of Education and Membership Development. Each issue of the *Stewards' Corner* will provide information about the rights, roles, and responsibilities of USW stewards and grievors and, more generally, on how to build the Union.

Stewards are the first line of defense for our members, our rights, and our collective bargaining agreements. You teach members why they

are the union and that solidarity is more than a bumper sticker—it's a way of life. Stewards have always been, and always will be, essential to the USW and our proud tradition of strength and unity for all workers.

In that spirit, please share this newsletter with the stewards, grievors, and anyone else in your Local Union who represents members. Smarter is stronger.

ROLES OF THE STEWARD

You Wear a Lot of Hats

In a basic sense, a steward is a person entrusted with the care and upkeep of something like an estate or item of property; if left unattended, problems start to fester. This is why stewards are so important: they are responsible for the care, support, and representation of their fellow workers. These values are in our DNA. At the founding convention of the United Steelworkers in 1942 delegates approved a set of principles that still guide our mission as a Union:

To unite in one organization, regardless of creed, color or nationality, all workmen and working women eligible for membership.

To increase the wages, and improve the conditions of employment of our members by legislation, joint agreements or other legitimate means.

Since then, stewards have been indispensable in carrying out this mandate in workplaces throughout Canada and the United States, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Today, the jargon varies in each Local Union. The USW Constitution



refers to "grievance or other committee members or stewards" in Article IX, Section 6. However, many Local Unions use "shop steward" to designate this role. Whatever the title, though, the tasks and duties are usually the same. Stewards are communicators, educators, organizers, problem solvers, and grievance handlers. The steward is the face of the Union on the shop floor. How you listen to and follow-up on members' concerns will influence the extent to which they identify with the Union. In turn, an employer's willingness to settle issues has a lot to do with how much they think members support their Steward and Union.

The first few issues of the *Stewards' Corner* will cover these responsibilities in more detail, beginning with the steward as a communicator, educator, and organizer. Let's get started! ⇌



To get future newsletters in your email use the QR code or go to: www.usw.org/StewardsCorner

You can take USW courses on-line at: education.usw.org

