

ITPEU news

INDUSTRIAL, TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES UNION
OPEIU LOCAL 4873, AFL-CIO



Summer 2025



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by John Brenton IV

Greetings, Brothers and Sisters,

Our motto is "It Pays to Belong!" and that motto certainly bears true across our 250 bargaining units. We could not be more proud

of our legacy, competency and our continual commitment to service. ITPEU officers and representatives work tirelessly to enforce provisions of the collective bargaining agreements and to bargain for higher wages and fringes. ITPEU clerical staff in Savannah ensure that the machine stays well-oiled. ITPEU shop stewards provide support on the shop floors and keep our representatives abreast of activity there. The ITPEU Benefit Plans continue to be managed by some of the best and brightest in the industry. OPEIU International and the AFL-CIO continue to seek out new and innovative "Members Only" benefits to reward the membership.

In many ways, I could not be more optimistic about our future; in other ways, the threats to the ITPEU and organized labor are hitting closer to home and are cause for alarm. While there are a multitude of challenges to be discussed, some existential, it only makes sense to devote this article to communicating one of the most singularly impactful issues specifically facing workers employed under the Service Contract Act.

Many of you are aware that President Obama signed Executive Order 13658 in 2014, which established a federal minimum wage of \$10.10/hr. President Biden signed a separate but similar Executive Order (EO14026) which established a minimum at \$15.00/hr. Over a short period of time that minimum rose to the current minimum of \$17.75/hr. While these Executive Orders might have been interpreted as "overreach" by some, the fact of the matter is that the prevailing wage and fringe rates were failing the workers and something needed to be done. The ITPEU not only played a critical role in enforcing EO14026, in most cases we were able to exceed the minimums and ensure that the rates trickled up to all covered employees.

Unfortunately, on March 14, 2025, President Trump revoked the Biden Administration's Executive Order establishing a \$17.75

minimum. However, he did not revoke the Order issued under the Obama Administration which is currently \$13.30. What does this mean for you, the ITPEU member covered under a collective bargaining agreement? There will be challenges, misinterpretations and it is very likely that many employers will be fearful to agree to higher wages and fringes until the dust settles. However, as of this moment, **our expert legal advisors and connections in government contracting believe that our collectively bargained wages and fringes will remain in place.** For those workers who are **not** covered under a collective bargaining agreement, they will have their wages lowered from \$17.75 to \$13.30 and they will have no recourse. While we have tremendous sympathy for these unorganized workers, here is yet another example of why membership in the ITPEU "Pays to Belong." We will continue to monitor the situation and are already taking precautions to counter any misinterpretations and misapplications which may arise.

Finally, it is the honor of a lifetime to serve as president of the ITPEU. I have much to be thankful for but I will save that for the Winter Issue. Until then...

Fraternally yours,

John Brenton IV
President



SLOGAN CONTEST

The ITPEU is holding its 9th Quadrennial Convention in 2026 and needs a slogan. Members are invited to submit their ideas for a slogan. If selected you will receive a \$100.00 prize and ITPEU merchandise which bears the slogan. The slogan must be no more than six words, be inspirational and related to labor unions. The contest ends on October 01, 2025. You can send as many as you think of. Send all slogans, including your name, contact information, your employer and where you work, to info@itpeu.org. **Good luck!**

JOHN BRENTON IV ACCLAIMED 4TH ITPEU PRESIDENT



A 4th generation union member and 18 year veteran of the ITPEU, President Brenton has served as representative, organizer, assistant to the president, secretary/treasurer, and has served on all three multi-employer benefit trusts. He is also Region III Vice President of OPEIU International.

Brenton says “I see this work as a vocation and I truly believe that the calling is to service and stewardship. I, and the other officers, executive board members, shop stewards and members, all play an equally important role in ensuring that the ITPEU lives up to its great mission.”

PATRICIA FOLEY ACCLAIMED VICE PRESIDENT



Patty Foley has worked for the ITPEU for the past 38 years. She began working with the union after assisting with the successful organization of Lackland AFB food service contract, where she had been working for 10 years. Her father, Pat Foley, was also a long-time ITPEU Representative. In addition

to being vice president, she is a representative overseeing the collective bargaining activities of approximately 900 ITPEU members in the San Antonio area. Since Patty was a secretary for a number of years dealing with the membership benefits first hand, she brings extensive knowledge of the Health and Welfare, Pension and Annual Benefit Funds.

LENA BAILEY ACCLAIMED SECRETARY/TREASURER



Prior to joining the staff at ITPEU, Lena worked in the food industry on military installations for 35 years. She has served the ITPEU as director of field operations/representative and, in 2019, was elected vice president. Lena is a member of the ITPEU Executive Board and has been a trustee for the ITPEU's Health & Welfare,

Annual Benefit and Pension Funds since 2008, where she is now the Vice Co-Chair. She services twenty-nine separate units and about 2400 members working on Service Contracts. The ITPEU has always been at the forefront of diversity and representation, and Lena's ascendancy to this position is further testimony of it. The ITPEU celebrates Lena for her years of service and for being the **first woman ITPEU Secretary/Treasurer and the first female Vice Co-Chair on the ITPEU's benefit funds.**

WILMA “COCO” ZIMMERMAN APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT



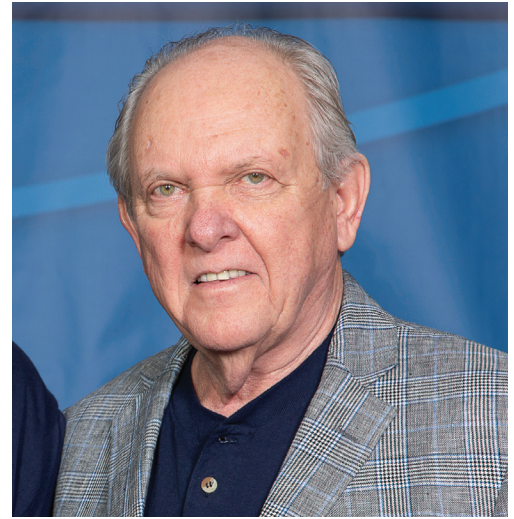
Wilma was born in Louisville, Kentucky. She left at age 26 to make her mark on the world by joining the US Coast Guard. She served for over 8 years, had 9 duty stations and lived in 15 different states. During this time she met her husband and had their son. After leaving the service to take care of their son, she enrolled back in college to

receive her Associates Degree. Still looking for something to do when she arrived in Georgia, she enrolled in the Culinary Program at the college and worked at the Cloister to become a certified chef. At her last duty station (Cape May, NJ), she took on the role of Shop Steward and that is how she became affiliated with ITPEU. In 2007, she was offered the Kentucky ITPEU Representative position. She is a representative and a trustee on the ITPEU's three multiemployer plans.

President Brenton writes: “Wilma's dedication to the membership and her commitment to civic activities makes her the perfect director for member engagement and I am sure our members will be well served.”



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It Pays To Belong!



THE END OF AN ERA

Dennis R. Arrington (front row, far left) retired on May 9, 2025. Dennis represents the last of the merchant marine union members from the National Maritime Union, from which the ITPEU sprang. While the NMU was absorbed into the Seafarer's International Union, the ITPEU continued to grow and thrive into a dynamic local representing 13,000 workers across 250 contract locations.

Dennis, a Savannah native, Vietnam War veteran and merchant marine, started with the ITPEU (then known as the ITPE) in 1983. He worked in Galveston, TX, then relocated back to the headquarters office in Savannah, GA. He worked first as an

organizer and organized thousands of members across the United States. To this day, Dennis knows just about every town in the USA and can tell you the best 'back roads' to get there.

He also held the titles of organizing director, representative, vice-president, secretary/treasurer, and president after his election in 2013. He has served as trustee, vice co-chair and co-chair of all three ITPEU benefit funds.

On May 20, 2025, the ITPEU Executive Board bestowed the title of President Emeritus. Dennis leaves a lasting legacy and his presence will be truly missed. We wish him and his loving wife, Jan, all of the best in their retirement.



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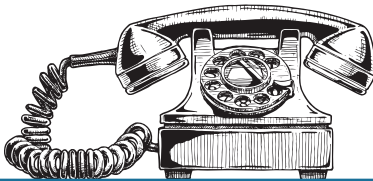
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