

CWA Local 2108 Member Autumn Mitchell Joins the AFL-CIO 2024 State of the Unions Event

CWA Local 2108 member Autumn Mitchell attended AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler's second annual "State of the Unions" address, outlining the key strides America's unions are making in building a better economy that works for all. The AFL-CIO brought together labor union leaders, workers, and allies to discuss the crucial role that the labor movement is playing in electing Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz to the White House.

Before President Shuler's speech, Mitchell shared with the audience the power of collective action within the video game industry and the growing momentum of support for CODE-CWA and video game workers across the nation.

"Six years ago, none of us were organized at tech and games. CWA worked really hard with us to build relationships, and now our union represents thousands of tech and game workers. Needless to say, I am really looking forward to the next six years," said Mitchell. "It's better in a union for us because it means finally having a real opportunity to change the games industry for the better."

CODE-CWA now represents over 6,000 workers in the tech and video game industries.



ZeniMax Workers United-CWA Local 2108 member Autumn Mitchell joined AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler at the 2024 State of the Unions event to amplify tech and video game organizing.

Are you "WEARING RED" on Thursdays?

CWA Local 2108 Town-Hall Meetings

Can't make the membership meetings? Have questions about issues in your workplace?

Join us online to discuss your concerns and find out what's going on in other areas of our Local. Attendees will have the opportunity to speak and fully participate in the discussions.

Tuesday, September 24, 2024 at 7:00pm - via Zoom

This Zoom meeting will be primarily geared toward Verizon technicians and other members working in outside locations such as Central Offices and garages.

To join this meeting, please copy this Zoom link and paste in your browser:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85637233454?pwd=exsGKvKbcqRYW1NpfiEVGL0Udz6IDz.1>

If joining by phone:

Meeting ID: 856 3723 3454

Passcode: 632886

Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 7:00pm - via Zoom

This Zoom meeting will be primarily geared toward Verizon members working in a call center environment and those working from home.

To join this meeting, please copy this Zoom link and paste in your browser:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81779604169?pwd=MJsIfFCLB0hfx499zaUCaKMLDTFuvt.1>

If joining by phone:

Meeting ID: 817 7960 4169

Passcode: 939422

Dial by your location:

- +1 646 931 3860 US
- +1 929 436 2866 US (New York)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (DC)
- +1 305 224 1968 US
- +1 309 205 3325 US
- +1 360 209 5623 US
- +1 386 347 5053 US
- +1 507 473 4847 US
- +1 564 217 2000 US



Reflections from the CWA Human Rights Conference: Connecting Workplace Safety, Labor Unions, and Human Rights

Attending the CWA Human Rights Conference in Houston, Texas, was a profound experience that reinforced the vital connections between workplace safety, labor unions, and human rights. A key moment during the conference was the discussion surrounding the tragic death of our union member, Osmar Chavarria. This discussion highlighted the dangers that workers face when cross-training for company flexibility leads them to operate equipment outside their usual assignments, often without adequate training or preparation.

Osmar's death, while not directly tied to systemic racism, underscores the critical need for proper safety measures and training in the workplace. When companies prioritize flexibility over safety, workers can be put in harm's way, as they may be required to use equipment or navigate environments they are not fully trained to handle. This issue resonates deeply within our union, as it directly impacts the well-being and safety of our members.

The conference also drew powerful connections between historical and contemporary struggles for labor rights and human dignity. The Memphis Sanitation Workers' Strike of 1968 was a pivotal moment in American history, where workers, carrying signs that read "I Am a Man," demanded recognition of their humanity and fair treatment in the workplace. Their struggle was not just for better wages and working conditions but also for the fundamental right to be treated with dignity.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. played a crucial role in supporting these workers, understanding that labor rights are human rights. His involvement in the strike highlighted how the fight for civil rights is deeply intertwined with the fight for labor rights.

This theme was further explored through the tragic example of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in 1911, where 146 garment workers—mostly young immigrant women—lost their lives due to unsafe working conditions. The fire was a stark reminder of what happens when worker safety is sacrificed for profit. It led to significant labor reforms, emphasizing the importance of safety regulations and the role of unions in advocating for

the rights and safety of workers.

In this context, the discussions at the conference also brought to light modern-day challenges, such as the implications of Project 2025. This policy proposal aims to lower the legal working age for certain hazardous jobs, potentially placing young workers in dangerous environments without adequate protection. Allowing younger workers to take on such roles not only endangers their safety but also undermines decades of progress in labor reform.

The connections between these historical events and our current struggles are clear. Whether it's the sanitation workers demanding recognition of their humanity, the garment workers seeking safety in their workplaces, or our union members like Osmar Chavarria facing the dangers of inadequate training and safety protocols, the fight for workplace safety, human dignity, and labor rights continues.

As a union, we must remain vigilant in advocating for our members' safety and ensuring that their rights are protected. The lessons from the past and the discussions at the CWA Human Rights Conference remind us that our work is not just about negotiating contracts or improving wages; it's about ensuring that every worker is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

In honoring the memory of those who have suffered due to unsafe working conditions and recognizing the potential threats posed by policies like Project 2025, we recommit ourselves to the ongoing fight for justice, safety, and human rights in the workplace.

Labor Votes!!

Maryland AFL-CIO Endorsed Candidates 2024

The Committee on Political Education (COPE) of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO endorsed the following candidates for the 2024 General Elections in Maryland and DC:

U.S. Senate:

Angela Alsobrooks

U.S. House of Representatives: Maryland

District 8: Jamie Raskin (incumbent)

District 7: Kweisi Mfume (incumbent)

District 6: April McClain-Delaney

District 5: Steny Hoyer (incumbent)

District 4: Glenn Ivey (incumbent)

District 3: Sarah Elfreth

District 2: John Olszewski Jr.

District 1: Blane H. Miller, III

District of Columbia:

Eleanor Holmes Norton
(incumbent)



2025 Union Plus Scholarship Program Accepting Applications Now

Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$5.6 million to students of working families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education. Over 4,000 families have benefited from our commitment to higher education.

Eligibility

Current and retired members of participating unions, their spouses and their dependent children (as defined by IRS regulations). At least one year of continuous union membership by the applicant, applicant's spouse or parent (if applicant is a dependent). The one year membership minimum must be satisfied by May 31, 2026.

Application Timeline:

Applications are available starting in mid-June, and a complete application must be received on or before 12:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) on **January 31, 2025**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Scholarship Award Amounts:

Amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall of 2025. Students may re-apply each year.

Award date:

The Scholarship Committee will determine recipients of scholarship awards by May 31st each year. During the first week of June 2025 award recipients will be notified by postal mail, and all applicants will be sent email notification.

To apply, go to:

www.unionplus.org/benefits/education/union-plus-scholarships

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Faces Federal Injunction as Strike Continues

After 22 months on strike, CWA members at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (CWA Local 14827, Local 14842, and TNG-CWA Local 38061) were vindicated on Wednesday when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) filed for an injunction against the company for its unlawful behavior during and leading to the country's longest-running strike. In the filing, the NLRB argues that the Post-Gazette has demonstrated that it will not follow federal labor law without a federal judge forcing it to do so.

If approved by a judge, the injunction would compel the company to pay press workers (PPPWU), advertisers (CWA), and mailers (CWA) for health care costs incurred as a result of the Post-Gazette's bad-faith bargaining and unilateral changes to union



members' health benefits. The injunction would also require the Post-Gazette to return members of the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh-CWA to the terms of their illegally violated 2014–17 contract, which includes the collectively bargained health care plan. It would also force the company to actually meet its legal obligation to bargain in good faith with all four striking unions on successor contracts and any agreements on health care, among other requirements of labor law that the Post-Gazette has violated.

"I've woken up every day for the past 22-plus months worried about making ends meet. I've been maced by PG-funded private security for simply picketing. I've had to postpone medical care as well as my wedding," said Alexandra Wimley, a striking photojournalist and member of NewsGuild-CWA. "And while I'm extremely proud to be standing with my fellow strikers, fighting for what's right, all of this could have been avoided if the company just followed the law."

Please consider making a donation to help the striking workers as they continue to fight for a fair contract.

Donald Trump Says Striking Workers Should Be Fired

During a live conversation on X with Elon Musk on August 15, 2024, Donald Trump expressed his support for firing striking workers, saying, "They go on strike, and you say, 'That's OK, you're all gone. You're all gone. So, every one of you is gone.'"

The United Auto Workers have filed an unfair labor practice charge against Trump and Musk for threatening workers who go on strike. The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) forbids employers from firing striking workers, and threatening to do so is illegal.

As president, Trump appointed union-busters to the National Labor Relations Board, which enforces the NLRA. Supreme Court Justices and federal judges appointed by Trump have consistently ruled in favor of bosses over workers. The one major piece of legislation that he passed, the Tax Cut and Jobs Act, cut taxes for corporations and the wealthy while making it more profitable for companies to send jobs overseas. It also eliminated the tax deduction for union dues.

In addition, the NLRB determined that a 2018 Twitter post by Musk unlawfully threatened Tesla employees with the loss of stock options if they decided to be represented by a union.

Three judges on the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans upheld that decision, as well as a related NLRB order that Tesla re-hire a fired employee, with back pay. But the full 5th Circuit later threw out that decision and voted to hear the matter again.

Personals

We wish to extend sincere sympathy to the family and friends of:

Retiree **Vernadine Jackson** passed who passed away on August 14, 2024.

Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out these important workshops presented by **Networth Financial** Group to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon!!

Retirement Cash Flow Planning

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 6:30 PM - Via Zoom

Retirement - What to Expect

Thursday, September 26, 2024 @ 6:30PM - Via Zoom

Reservations are required and to RSVP you may call **Networth** at **(800)-859-2212**, or register online at :

<http://www.networth.net/event/marylanddcvirginia>

NetWorth is also advising members who are considering retirement to schedule an appointment to evaluate your company supplied pension calculations. Over the past 20 years, Networth has uncovered numerous calculation discrepancies and their Independent Pension Analysis can help verify accuracy.

Verizon to Implement Changes in 401(k)

In case you missed it, The SECURE 2.0 Act permits 401(k) plans to increase catch up contributions for participants age 60-63 to the greater of \$10,000 or 150% of the regular catch up limit.



Verizon notified CWA that they plan to implement this change in the law effective January 1, 2025 to allow eligible employees to save additional money into their 401(k). Eligible associates will be notified by Fidelity of their eligibility for this additional benefit.

Verizon will begin implementation activities September 6, 2024.

Have You Scheduled Your Floating Holiday?

It seems that almost every year CWA Local 2108 hears from members who haven't scheduled their Floating Holiday prior to October 1st of the calendar year and then Verizon denies that employee the ability to schedule after that date, causing them to lose it altogether. It is the Union's position that if an employee has not scheduled it by October 1st, it is the company's responsibility to notify the employee to schedule it at that time.



With that being said, CWA Local 2108 strongly suggests that all of our members working under the Verizon agreement schedule their Floating Holiday prior to October 1, 2024. This way you cannot be denied the ability to schedule your holiday. Keep in mind that you can still be required to work on your Floating Holiday. In that case you will receive holiday pay treatment just as if you worked any other negotiated holiday.

Skip the Lines and Save Some Time - Vote Early!!

Local 2108 Calendar

Who can vote early?

Any person that is eligible to register to vote, can vote. Registered voters have always been able to vote during early voting, but now individuals who are eligible but not yet registered can register and vote.

To register and vote during early voting, go to an early voting center in the county where you live and bring a document that proves where you live. This document can be your MVA-issued license, ID card, or change of address card, or your paycheck, bank statement, utility bill, or other government document with your name and new address. You will be able to register to vote and vote.

When can I vote early?

2024 Elections

General Election - Thursday, October 24, 2024 through Thursday, October 31, 2024 from 7am until 8pm.

Where can I vote early?

You can vote in an early voting center in the county where you live. To see a complete list of early voting centers go to:

https://elections.maryland.gov/voting/early_voting.html (then scroll down to the "Where can I vote early" link)

How will I vote during early voting?

Voting during early voting is the same as voting on election day. When you get to the early voting center, you will check in to vote and vote your ballot.

There will be instructions available at the early voting centers to familiarize you with the ballot. You may ask an election judge to explain how to vote, but you must cast your vote alone, unless you are unable to do so because you have a disability or are unable to read or write the English language.

I'm registered to vote, but I need to make a change. Can I make that change during early voting?

If you moved, you can update your address. You will be able to change your address and vote.

If you want to change your party affiliation, you can't do that at an early voting center. You must wait until after the election to change your party affiliation.

If you changed your name, you must vote under your former name, but you can fill out a form with your new name. Your name will be updated after the election.



SEPTEMBER 2024

- 2 **LaborDay**
Local Office Closed
- 11 **RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 **Membership Meeting - 6:00pm**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 18-19 **New Stewards Training - 8:30am**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 24 **Town Hall Mtg. w/Techs- 7:00pm**
Via Zoom
- 25 **Town Hall Mtg. w/Call Center 7:00pm**
Via Zoom

OCTOBER 2024

- 11 **RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 11 **Membership Meeting - 6:00pm**
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 24-31 **MD Early Voting - 7am-8pm Daily**
- 31 **Halloween**



WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or have any effect on my personal working conditions, I respectfully request my union representative, officer or steward to be present at this meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Membership Meeting - Wednesday, September 11, 2024 - 6:00pm
RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, September 11, 2024 - 11:00am

2108News
Published Monthly
Printing Done In-House

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ISSN: 0162-248X

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