

12/6/2018

Sisters and Brothers,

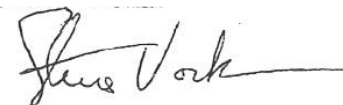
We have recently suffered yet another tragic loss within our membership with the suicide of Alex Thornton. Within our plant the suicide rate is many times the national average. We have dealt with this issue way too often, and we must do something about this. Talking about suicide prevention is important and it is a conversation that must be had, but it's just as important to talk about mental illness. Unfortunately, the reality is that someone who is contemplating suicide may not be in the right mindset to have the ability to rationalize that they need to reach out for help. That is like telling someone whose house has already burnt down to call 911. We need to start having conversations about mental health. We need to remove the stigma that we as Americans seem to have about talking about mental illness. Many people are afraid to talk about mental illness because they see these disorders as character flaws and weakness instead of what they really are, which is a medical condition. Someone being treated for a major depressive disorder is no less a person than someone being treated for high cholesterol. The only difference is one is a condition of the heart and the other is a condition of the brain, yet we don't see them the same. This must change. The fact is, someone dealing with a mental health condition should be treated no differently than someone with a medical issue. They should feel like they could reach out if they were having a mental health crisis without fear of judgement, no different than someone experiencing a medical emergency. It's up to all of us to stop and reconsider how we think about this and do a better job of caring for one another if we are to make things better.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Health 1 in 5 Americans, (over 43 million) will experience some form of mental disorder in a given year. Additionally, 50% of U.S. adults will develop at least one mental illness in their lifetime.

Depression, Anxiety, OCD, Substance abuse, Eating disorders, Bi-polar and Schizophrenia are some examples of mental disorders. Every person in this factory has probably been affected by mental illness either personally or with a family member or co-worker. Life is difficult. We experience loss and separation. We suffer through health issues for ourselves and our families. People sometimes deal with marital ups and downs, financial issues, extended work weeks, and other reasons that could lead into depression or situational anxiety. There is nothing wrong with seeking help for any of these issues. Whether it's confiding in a friend, or talking to a counselor, pastor, or legal or financial advisor, seek help. Talking to someone can help relieve some of the stress and pain associated with these situations and will often give you a new perspective and the skills to deal with these issues.

Local 310 is actively working on putting together a Crisis Intervention Team so that members who are in a crisis type situation will have immediate resources available when needed. These team members will receive training in both identifying and dealing with people in the midst of a mental crisis and for those who are in fear due to a domestic situation. We are also partnering with the Company on some joint training that deals with mental illnesses. Our members need to know that there is someone who will listen and that there are many options available when help is needed. This will be an ongoing project, but we wanted you all to know that we are fully committed to helping not only remove the stigma of talking about mental illness, but also providing the resources that could potentially be lifesaving.

In Solidarity,
Steve Vonk,



President USW Local 310L

Sisters and brothers, as 2018 comes to a close and we prepare to bring in a new year, we would like to wish you all a happy and safe holiday season and share a few thoughts from this past year as well as few things to look forward to in the year to come.

NEXT GENERATION

We are proud to announce that the Next Generation Committee is making a return for 2019. Next Generation is about education, activism, and mobilizing the next generation of union members. Whether you are 18 or 88 you have a place in the Next Generation Committee. Local 310 has a long tradition of being a leader in union activism. When we were U.R.W. we had a bold reputation within that International, and that carried over into our relationship with the Steelworkers when we accepted their charter. Union activity is on the decline, and our future depends on us breathing new life into the movement. There are officer training opportunities available through our local. We are dedicated to training, and our local sends up to 10 members to the Charlie Richardson Education Institute each June. We are also looking for opportunities to reach out to our community to educate about positive things labor unions do for the community. We also want to focus on internal organizing and educating our members to ensure that as a body we know our rights, and we can grow stronger together. This committee will kick off after the first of the year, and we will do everything we can to make it available to all shifts. Watch for information that will be coming soon as we finalize plans. You can stop by the hall and sign the interest list if you are interested in being involved.

WOMEN OF STEEL

The Women of Steel Committee would like to thank the membership for all of your support again this year. Because of your generosity, we were able to help several organizations such as Soaring Hearts Foundation, Broadlawns Mammography Department, and Hawthorn Hill. We also were able to send members to Iowa Council meetings and the USW International Women's Conference in Toronto. We appreciate the opportunity to represent Local 310 and we look forward to 2019!

MEMBERSHIP AND SOLIDARITY

Thanks to your solidarity, dedication, and hard work, Local 310 has negotiated significant wage increases for every member that go into effect on January 1st of each of the four remaining years of the contract. These gains could only be negotiated because of the strength of our membership. We are currently at 99% membership. Our goal is to be at 100%. To help us reach that goal, **please ask the following people to join our union:**

Jeannie Gregory CC# 12622	124-C
Rosalind Walker CC# 12005	124-A
Michael Aves CC# 9195	135-B
Don Cox Jr. CC# 10915	146-C
Michael McKay CC# 8539	179-A
Jerry Ballard CC# 10116	179-A
Sean Becker CC# 11183	412-1
Steve Greenhorn CC# 9397	412-3
Sabrina Jensen CC# 11691	412-A
Diana Walle CC# 12010	422-A
Bill Peterson CC# 8805	831-1
Aaron Gweah CC# 12788	248-A
Christine Dingman CC# 12714	412-4

If you feel that your name has been placed on this list incorrectly, please call the Union Hall at 515-288-9547.