



# Drive Up Standards

# NEWSLETTER

Connecting School Bus & Transit Workers From Coast to Coast

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## Local 243 Wins 35 Grievances for Workers at Ypsilanti Community Schools

Durham School Services drivers, monitors and mechanics for Ypsilanti Community Schools voted yes to join Local 243 in March 2016. Since that time, stewards Leslie Harris and Deanne Freeman, along with Local 243 Recording-Secretary Neil Pettit, and Business Agents Scott Quenneville and Phil Turner, have been hard at work protecting and promoting workplace fairness.

Over the last nine months, Local 243 has won more than 35 grievance victories on behalf of its members. These include protesting unfair discharges and suspensions, violations of seniority rights and employer harassment. Combined, those 35 grievances totaled more than \$12,200 in settlement payments to affected members.

"The drivers and monitors at Ypsilanti do a fantastic job of making sure students in Ypsilanti get to and from school safely. It's our job to make sure the company has their backs and are abiding by the contract," Pettit said. "We are all very proud of the remarkable team approach we have when it comes to member representation. Our complete union commitment makes a notable difference in protecting the membership's jobs, rights and respect."

## Local 984 Hosts Back-to-School BBQ



On July 28, 2018, Local 984 hosted a back-to-school BBQ for its drivers and monitors at Durham School Services in Memphis, Tenn.

"The event is a good opportunity for drivers and monitors to get ready for the school year, build relationships with their co-workers, learn more about the union and have fun with one another," said Local 984 Business Agent Corry Hayes.

Wanda Albertson is a driver with 25 years of service. In addition to being a steward, she is President of the Local 984 Women's Caucus. Albertson noted that the BBQ was a great opportunity to demonstrate Teamster unity and educate drivers about what it means to be in the union.

"We have to give back to one another; let each other know together we stand and divided we fall," Albertson said. "We're going in strong for the 2018-19 school year and starting it off on the right foot, with a positive mind and positive attitude. It also gives drivers and monitors a chance to ask business agents, elected officers and stewards questions they might have. Anything we can do to support one another."

Denise Tinsdall is also a driver for Durham School Services. She has also been a Teamster for 25 years, and most recently she became a steward at her yard.

"This event is a good opportunity for people to build relationships with one another and foster a sense of camaraderie," Tinsdall said. "We have fun—not just with this; the Teamsters do a lot. The local has Christmas parties, they give out scholarships for kids. They're very helpful and they're always involved in the community."

*The Teamsters "Drive Up Standards" newsletter is by and for school bus drivers, monitors and mechanics. This newsletter is published quarterly in print and online at [www.driveupstandards.org](http://www.driveupstandards.org).*

## Drivers and Monitors at Illinois Central School Bus Ratify National Master Agreement

*Members Vote Overwhelmingly for Increased Job Protections, Higher Standards*



**T**eamster members at North America Central School Bus, formerly Illinois Central School Bus, voted overwhelmingly to ratify the Illinois Cooperative Agreement with the company. Over 40 percent of Illinois Central bus drivers and monitors are already covered by the agreement as members of Locals 777, 525, 179, 50 and 26.

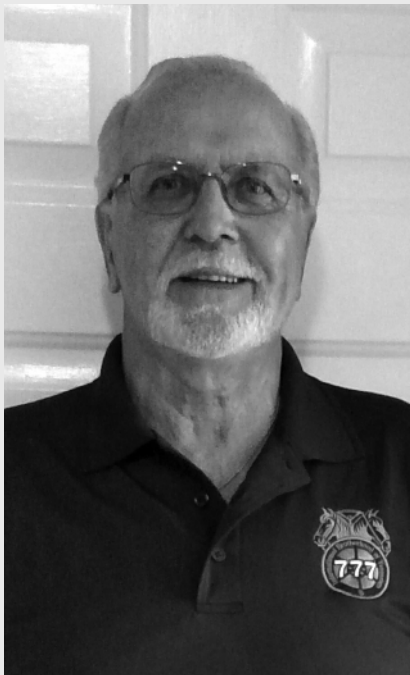
The agreement includes a number of substantial improvements, including procedures related to workers' compensation claims and

disciplinary processes, as well as an expedited process for correcting payroll errors. The scope of the agreement has also been broadened to include workers at any existing North American Central School Bus yards who choose to join the Teamsters. This opens up opportunities to increase Teamster density as North American Central continues to grow and expand operations in other states.

Passenger Transportation Division Representative and Local 777 President Jim Glimco worked closely with North American Central Teamster local unions as chief negotiator for the Cooperative Agreement.

"We're creating a standard in this industry, and we're not going to stop organizing and negotiating great contracts until we have every school bus driver at that standard," said Glimco. "I think other companies are going to realize that. We want people to be treated properly; a lot better than they have been treated in the past. We want to make this a proper job with good pay and benefits that match the skill level and professionalism this job requires, because unfortunately it's really undervalued right now."

The first Cooperative Agreement was ratified in December 2012. Go to <https://teamster.org/illinois-central-cooperative-agreement> to view the contract documents.



### North American Central Master Agreement Local Contracts a Win for Our Membership

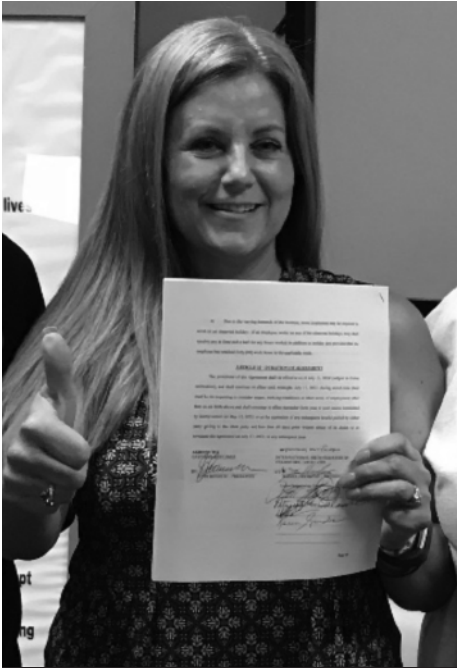
By Jerry Marshall, Local 777

**I** work for Illinois Central Bus Company, a subsidiary of North American Central Bus Company, out of the St. Charles yard in St. Charles, Ill. I'm a steward, and I've been a bus driver for 10 years—eight with Illinois Central.

I believe that it's important for drivers and monitors to stick together, and our most recent local contract is a good example of that. We got almost everything we asked for, with some very significant gains. We got pay increases and a more detailed grievance procedure. We got more seniority protections and they straightened out the issues regarding hazardous fluid clean up.

*It's an agreement that satisfies both the workers and the company.*

*This contract is an example of why bus drivers and monitors need the protections that come with Teamster membership. Without a seniority system in place, drivers and monitors could end up losing routes or getting shorted because of favoritism, but the seniority system in our contract protects all of us. If you work at North American Central and you're not a member of the Teamsters yet, you should sign up. It makes the company work better because the union is watching over us to make sure that everyone is treated fairly.*



## After a Three-Year Fight, East End Bus Workers Win Contract

By Lori Rizzatano, Local 1205

I started working for East End Bus Lines (EEBL) in 2009. Everything was fine there until 2014, when our working conditions changed drastically. They gave us a raise of only 10 cents, we lost sick days, we stopped getting paid for certain days off and for bereavement leave we no longer received a full day's pay. It was around this time that we started saying we needed a union.

We contacted Local 1205 and met with Vice President Gary Kumpa. In September 2015 we kicked off the organizing campaign, talking to co-workers and getting authorization cards signed. We wanted a union, but fear ran wild as the company's ownership got wind of it. I got all of my extra work taken away from me because I was getting cards signed, but I knew my rights, so I didn't get discouraged.

The union brought in International Organizers, and after getting a list of the employees we started visiting with our co-workers at home where we were all less intimidated. We wanted support from 70 percent of our

co-workers before we filed for an election because of the intimidation and fear that was going on at our company.

On the day of the vote, February 26, 2016, EEBL parked a tractor trailer directly in front of the building where the vote was being held. It had a huge sign on it that said "VOTE NO UNION." EEBL handed out "Vote No" T-shirts, pens, buttons, bracelets and even cookies wrapped in "Vote No" paper.

I was the observer for the Teamsters. In the end, there were 121 votes for us, 16 for a different union, and 103 no votes. I challenged 18 votes. East End Bus Lines argued that not everyone who was eligible to be in the bargaining unit was included in the vote, and they fought the results of the election.

We had to go to National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to get recognition in July 2016. I gathered evidence for the hearing: photos, inter-office company emails, things like that. I testified for the union, and we won! The Teamsters were made the exclusive bargaining agent for EEBL employees.

In September 2016, we came to work to find that 40 percent of our co-workers were moved to the other, non-Teamster yard two miles away. That yard received increases in their hours and salaries. EEBL was still trying to fight the unions by making our yard smaller and us less powerful.

We went back to the NLRB. EEBL racked up over 50 Unfair Labor Practices (ULPs), including a few for taking away work from em-

ployees that wanted the union. We won the back pay that we would have gotten if we still had our extra work. In March 2017, EEBL was forced to bring back the extra work, along with the routes and the employees they had transferred. We continued to fight side by side with our local union to demand fairness and in April 2018 the NLRB ordered EEBL to move everything from the non-Teamster yard back to our bus yard.

John Mensch, the owner, was forced to read a settlement agreement from the NLRB to his workers with NLRB agents and Teamsters present. Workers walked out as he read the first sentence. No one from the company stopped them and Mensch smiled as he continued to read the settlement.

In May 2017, almost three years after we had started organizing, we finally began negotiating our contract. Local 1205 listened to us and knew exactly what was important: health care, retirement and wages. We wouldn't back down from those things, and we stuck with it. Negotiating with EEBL for a first contract was no picnic, but in the end, we got what we wanted. After 14 months of negotiating, we brought it to the workers for a vote. It was a landslide.

I'm happy to report that by July 2018, the nonunion yard shut down completely. The workers and the routes are coming back for the start of this school year under a strong Teamster contract. It was a long and difficult fight, but it was worth it. JUSTICE PREVAILED!



## Organizing Round Up

*From coast to coast, workers all across the country are joining the movement to drive up standards in our industry! As we start back to school in the 2019-20 school year, here are some of the highlights in organizing over the past year:*

### School Bus Monitors and Drivers In Wright City, Mo. Join Local 610

With over 85 percent turnout, drivers and monitors at Durham School Services in Wright City, Mo. sent a strong message to the company and voted overwhelmingly to join Local 610.

Barbara Schaffrin is a driver at the Wright City bus yard.

"I'm just so glad we finally won, I broke down in tears I was so excited," Schaffrin said.

### Drivers and Monitors with North River Collaborative Join Local 653

After a three-year fight for representation, drivers and monitors with Massachusetts' North River Collaborative officially won recognition as members of Local 653 in South Easton, Mass. The 108 workers transport students with special needs and are based in Abington and Rockland.

"We decided to organize because we need job security, seniority and the backing of a union, and that's why we contacted Local 653," said Jim Swanton, a 10-year driver for North River Collaborative. "It's been a pleasure working with the Teamsters and we're ecstatic about joining the union."

### Durham Workers Join Fellow Southern California Drivers with Local 572

School bus drivers, monitors and mechanics who work at Durham School Services in Carson, Calif. voted by a 2-1 margin to join Local 572. The workers will join more

than 500 Durham School Services employees already represented by a Teamster contract in the Los Angeles-metro area.

Leroy Hose has been a Durham school bus driver for three years. He was one of the most active leaders in the union organizing effort at the Carson yard.

"I'm happy that the membership of the yard can see the big picture of how bright the future can be for us," Hose said.

### STA Workers Join Local 449

School bus drivers and monitors working for Student Transportation of America (STA) voted overwhelmingly to join Local 449. The 59 workers transport students for the Newfane Central School District.

Dick Eberhart, a driver at STA Newfane, was a member of the United Auto Workers for 35 years and knows what it means to have a strong union on your side.

"I was a proud UAW member for 35 years; I can't wait to become a proud Teamster," Eberhart said. "A Teamster contract gives us representation with our employer, and we can use that representation to end favoritism in the workplace and provide ourselves with job security. All STA workers deserve the respect that comes with a Teamster contract."

### First Student Westmont Bus Monitors Vote to Join Local 777

With more than 80 percent voting in favor of union representation, school bus monitors at First Student in Westmont, Ill. have become the newest members of Local 777.

Bertha Adams is a monitor at First Student Westmont with 15 years of experience,

and she has been with the company since 2012.

"Monitors at First Student in Villa Park and Glen Ellyn reach a \$15-per-hour rate, why not us?" Adams said. "It's not just about wages, either. A Teamster contract will also bring us job security, representation and guaranteed safety standards for our vehicles."

### Albany First Student Drivers and Monitors Vote to Join Local 294

Drivers and Monitors in Albany, N.Y. voted by a two-to-one margin to become members of Local 294. The 172 drivers and monitors work for First Student, transporting students for the Albany City School District. The workers will immediately be covered under the First Student National Master Agreement, which provides workers with safety provisions, a grievance process, paid leave and other benefits.

### Durham Workers Join Local 243

More than 200 Durham School Services drivers and monitors voted overwhelmingly to become members of Local 243 in Plymouth Township, Mich. The workers that transport students for Ann Arbor Public School are just the latest Durham employees to join the Teamsters in Michigan.

"These drivers and monitors joined together in solidarity, stood up for one another and demonstrated tremendous bravery during this campaign," said Local 243 President Jim "Cinci" Cianciolo. "We're looking forward to meeting the company at the negotiating table."

**Have a question or story idea?**  
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